The Magazine for Advanced Comic Book Collectors

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

No. 54
December 1997

© 1997 MEG

$6.95 U.S./$9.50 Canada
A GEMSTONE PUBLICATION

DIRECT SALES
05411>
7 14899 21116 3

BACK IN PRINT

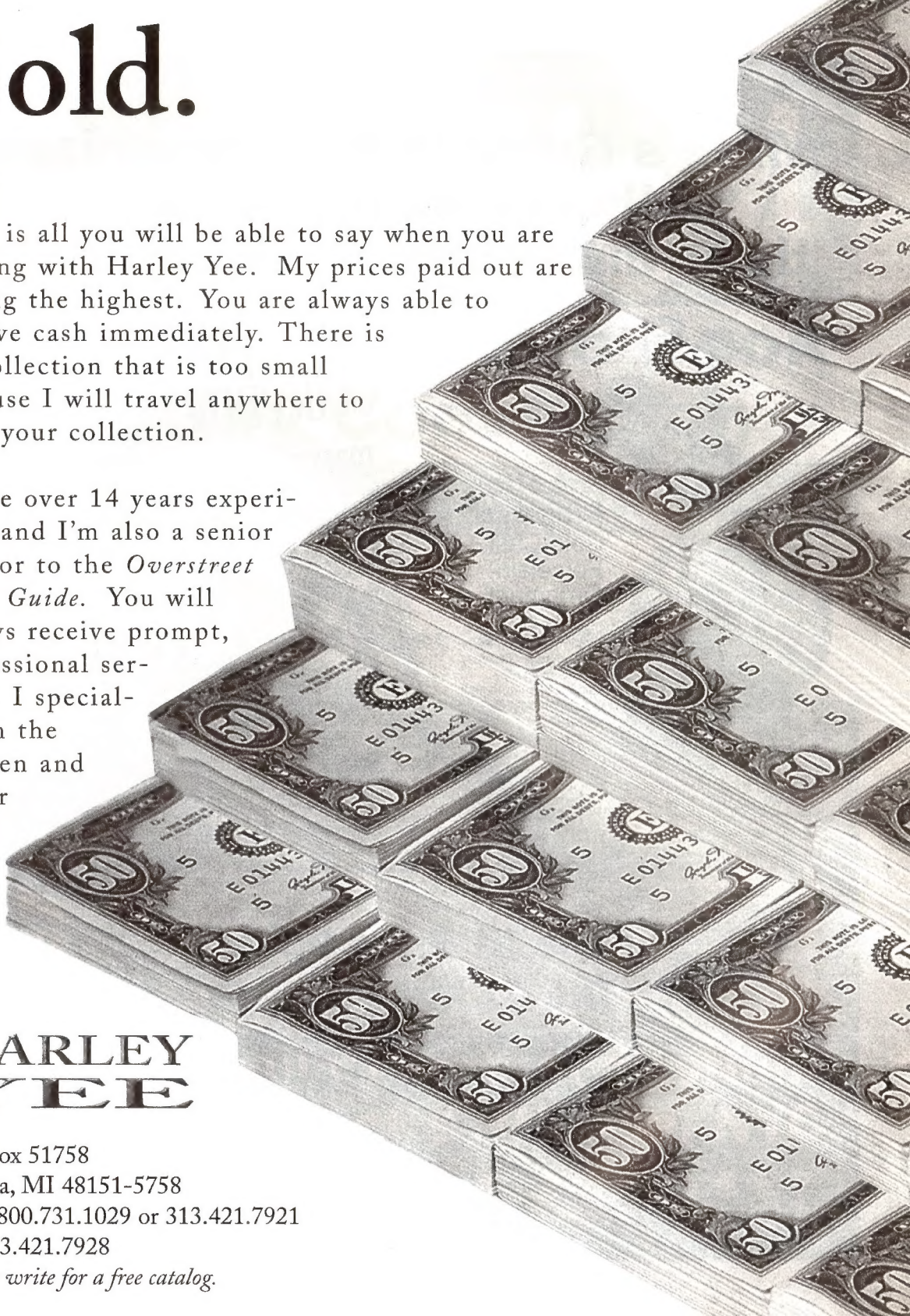
THE COMPLETE VAULT OF HORROR

Back in print for the first time in more than 3 years!
The complete deluxe edition of the 29 issue run! Check your local retailer or call 1-800-EC-CRYPT to order.

Sold.

That is all you will be able to say when you are dealing with Harley Yee. My prices paid out are among the highest. You are always able to receive cash immediately. There is no collection that is too small because I will travel anywhere to view your collection.

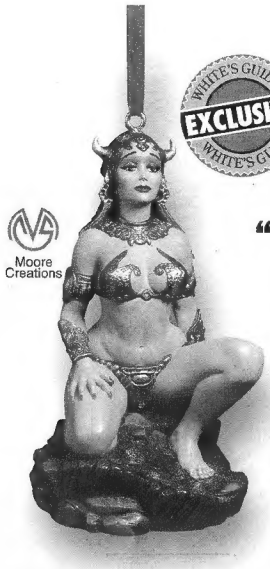
I have over 14 years experience and I'm also a senior advisor to the *Overstreet Price Guide*. You will always receive prompt, professional service. I specialize in the Golden and Silver Age.



HARLEY YEE

P.O. Box 51758
Livonia, MI 48151-5758
voice: 800.731.1029 or 313.421.7921
fax: 313.421.7928
Call or write for a free catalog.

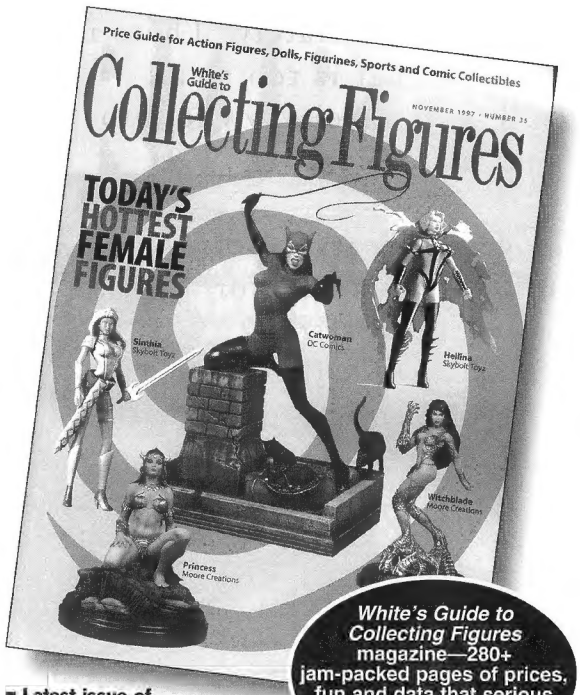
White's Guide is the recognized authority on figural and three-dimensional collectibles



Frazetta's "Princess" Cold-Cast Porcelain Ornament

Frank Frazetta, internationally renowned as the grand-master of fantasy art, has graciously authorized an ornament of the "Princess" by award winning sculptor Clayburn Moore. This piece captures the elegance, voluptuousness and enchantment of the female form, which are hallmarks of the Frazetta style. The "Princess" Cold-Cast Porcelain Ornament is a hand-painted, limited edition of 3,000 numbered pieces.

■ **Frazetta's Princess: $19.95**
Plus $4.50 s/h (U.S.) or $9.50 s/h (Foreign).


Price Guide for Action Figures, Dolls, Figurines, Sports and Comic Collectibles
White's Guide to
Collecting Figures
NOVEMBER 1997 · NUMBER 35
TODAY'S HOTTEST FEMALE FIGURES
Sinthia Skybolt Toys
Catwoman DC Comics
Hellina Skybolt Toys
Witchblade Moore Creations
Princess Moore Creations

■ **Latest issue of *White's Guide*: $6 postpaid**

White's Guide to Collecting Figures **magazine—280+ jam-packed pages of prices, fun and data that serious collectors can't live without.**

The #1 Price Guide
The #1 Marketplace
The #1 Source for Limited-Edition Exclusives

To order, call toll free 1-888-280-0389

White's Guide to
Collecting Figures

All images of Frank Frazetta artwork ™© Frank Frazetta. Moore Creations logo ™ Clayburn S. Moore 1996.

The next

Fantastic 4

Big Apple Comic Book & Toy Convention

4 DATES

SERIOUS COLLECTORS

this is the place to buy, sell, or treade...

1, Sat. Jan. 10
2, Sat. Feb. 14
3, Fri. Mar. 6 - Sat. Mar. 7
4, Sat. Apr. 4

DEALERS

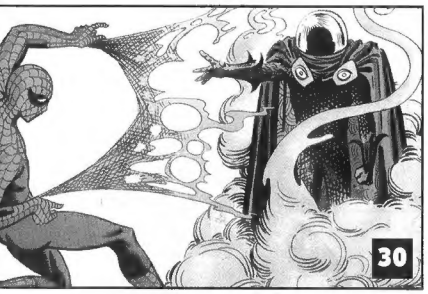
Harley Yee	T-&-T
Metropolis Comics	Lily Mae Collectibles
Gary Dolgoff Comics	North Coast Nostalgia
Motor City	Robert Prosperino
Vincent's Collectibles	Vintage Investors Associates
Comic Relief	Nostalgic Investments
Four Color Comics	Doc Robinson's Comics
Comic Box Productions	Danny Fuchs
Village Comics	Rino's Comics
Silver Age Comics	Joe Koch
Paper Heroes	Attic Nonsport Cards
Outer Limits	Steve Borock
Albert Moy	+many more, artists, publishers, special guests

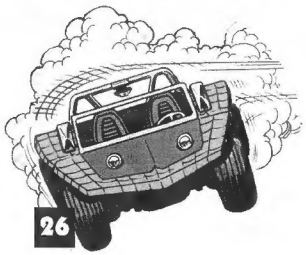
@ **St. Paul Church Auditorium**
59th Street & 9th Ave. NYC

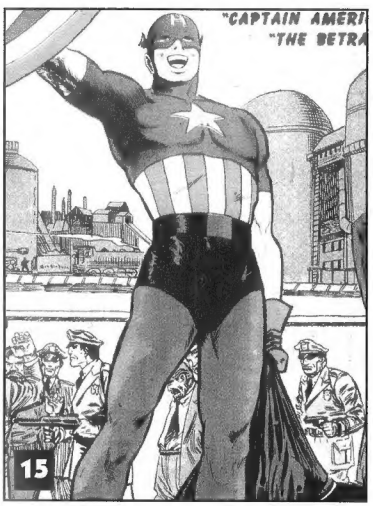
Hotline: 718-275-1567
www.digdomdes.com/bigapple

CBM CONTENTS

NUMBER 54 Dec. 1997







ALL CHARACTERS, COVERS & IMAGES © 1997 MEG

FEATURES

Man of Many Covers!
An homage to the legendary Jean Frisano! by Eric Vignolles **21**

The Fabulous Spider-Mobile!
There's no bat in this mobile! by Tony Starks **26**

Spider-Villains!
Classic bad guys created by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko! by Jason Versaggi **30**

The Golden Age of Captain America!
Spies and traitors beware! by Lou Mougin **34**

Sentinels of Liberty!
Cap's crusade against spies, fifth columnists & traitors in the U.S.! by David Lynn **36**

Captain Americana!
Those wonderful Cap collectibles! by Richard Holley **42**

Fighting the Good Fight!
Guardian of Marvel morality! by Arnold T. Blumberg **46**

The Man Without Fear!
Daredevil, a hero for the everyman! by Benn Ray & Arnold T. Blumberg **50**

What the Heck is an S-13?
Collecting Super DC Giants from the Bronze Age! by Bill Alexander **55**

COLUMNS

Adventures Into Weird Words
Nineteenth Century Fantasy, Mystery, and Adventure! by Pat S. Calhoun **11**

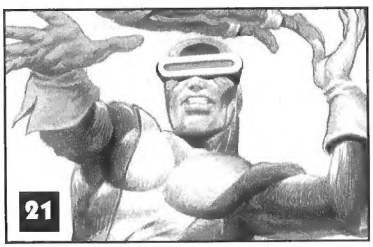
Nolan's Notebook
Forgotten reincarnations of Captain America! by Michelle Nolan **15**

Second Time Around
Captain America reprints! by Shawn Hamilton **71**

Volume 2 • Number 54
December 1997
A Gemstone Publication

DEPARTMENTS

Letter from the Editor 6
Marketplace Mail 8
Subscription Service.....8
Back Issues 9
Market Reports 72
Coming Next Issue.....78
Advertising Info.....79



PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Comic Book Marketplace – Gemstone Publishing, Inc. copyright 1997 Stephen A. Geppi, all rights reserved under international and Pan-American copyright conventions. The information in this publication is protected under U.S. copyright law. Absolutely no part of this publication maybe reproduced in any form whatsoever (including mechanically, photographically, and/or electronically), without the prior written consent of the publisher. All articles and columns are the express opinion of the individual contributing artists and authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Gemstone Publishing, Comic Book Marketplace, its staff, or its advertisers. All characters, names, logos, trademarks, and symbols depicted and/or described in articles and other editorial material are owned and copyrighted by their individual companies. Inquiries regarding this publication (including advertising) and letters to the editor should be addressed to: Comic Book Marketplace, c/o Gemstone Publishing, Inc. (West), P.O. Box 180700, Coronado, CA 92178-0700, telephone **(619) 437-1996** FAX (619) 437-1993. First class subscription $60 (USA, residents of Missouri and Maryland add applicable sales tax); $62 (Canada and Mexico, US funds); $110 (England and Western Europe, US funds); $120 (Japan and Philippines, US funds). Advertising and subscription rates may change without notice. **Issue Number #54, December 1997**

ON THE COVER:
A close-up of Daredevil #43 (Aug 1968).
SHOWN HERE: A close-up of the cover art from Captain America #47 (Jun 1945).

More than a Hobby...

Welcome to the special holiday number of *Comic Book Marketplace*. This issue represents something of a milestone for us... not only are we being packaged for this special occasion with the *Overstreet Price Guide Update* and are spotlighting one of the great characters in comic history, Captain America... we are also celebrating the seventh anniversary of the inception of *CBM*.

It was back in December of 1990 (seems like yesterday) that I first proposed the idea of *CBM* to Lisa. We were sitting around the living room when I uttered the following statement "there doesn't seem to be any publication for Golden Age and Silver Age collectors anymore. Why don't we put out a fanzine for collectors just like me? It couldn't take that much work could it? I'll bet we could put together a monthly mag in one or maybe two weekends a month... tops!"

This turned out to be the biggest understatement in history, as the realities of publishing quickly set in. What was begun as a weekend project expanded exponentially and weekends rapidly became a seven-day work week. But even with all the effort and time investment, we knew we were on to something wonderful.

That's when the support from all corners of the hobby really started. Readers willingly shared their discoveries, ideas and opinions in the pages of *CBM*, in an open and positive forum. Serious comic book researchers dusted off their notebooks and began compiling checklists and indexes anew. Through the pages of *CBM* I met hundreds (thousands?) of "new" collectors previously unknown to me. A veritable throng of US and Canadian collectors were quickly added to our subscription rolls. I began regular telephone and written correspondence with a newly discovered army of overseas collectors as hobbyists from Europe, Japan, Australia, and South America "put in their lot" with *CBM*, making our readership and our content truly international in scope. An avalanche of serious hobbyists had resoundingly made their presence known and generously contributed articles, research, market information, and letters.

And now, in what seems like the blink of an eye, it's seven years later and *CBM* "the magazine for advanced comic book collectors" is still going strong. The number of contributors/readers now number in the thousands, and *CBM* is distributed around the world.

On this seventh "anniversary" I'd like to take a moment and personally thank all of you for reading and supporting *CBM*. Your unswerving loyalty and generous support is greatly appreciated, and ensures our continued exploration and celebration of our beloved hobby.

I've often said "comic book collecting is more than a hobby... it's a passion!" After nearly four decades of buying, collecting, researching... and really loving comic books with all my heart, that idea is truer than ever.

Today is Saturday, and in a few minutes my son and I will be off on yet another collecting adventure, armed with just four things: Our "comic book allowance," the latest *Overstreet Guide*, our ever-growing want list, and our *passion* for the hobby we most love... collecting comic books!

'Till next month, don't forget to ask Santa to fill the holes on your want list!

Gary

Gary M. Carter

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

EDITOR
Gary M.Carter

ART DIRECTOR
Lisa M.Carter

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Pat Calhoun

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Michael Naiman

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Scotty Moore • Phil Barnhart

COPY EDITORS
Beth Holley • Amanda Kitzmiller

EDITORIAL ASSOCIATES
Betty McChesney • Mick Rabin

OFFICE & SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER
Amanda Kitzmiller

DESIGN CONSULTANTS
Joe Sikoryak • Brenda Busick

MAGAZINE CONSULTANT
Bill Howard

TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS
Mark Haynes • Arnie Sawyer
Mark Yturralde • Malcolm Hargrave

MARKETING DIRECTOR
J. C. Vaughn

GEMSTONE WEBSITE
www.gemstonepub.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS AND ARTISTS
David T. Alexander • Murphy Anderson
Jon Berk • Arnold T. Blumberg
Mike Brandenburg • Bob Brodsky
John Coates • J. Keith Contarino
Peter DePree • Duane Dimock • Steven Fears
Creig Flessel • Barry Forshaw • Jeff Gelb
Stephen Gentner • Rolf Gerdau
David Gerstein • Matthew Gore • Dave Grisez
Shawn Hamilton • Bruce Hamilton
Tracey Heft • Roger Hill • Robert Kiefer
Francis Litzinger • Gene Lomoriello
Chris Malins • Richard Martines
Harry Matetsky • Erich Medenbach
Lou Mougin • Will Murray • Michelle Nolan
Greg Pharis • Benn Ray • Ed Rhoades
Steve Ringgenberg • Charlie Roberts
Rob Satonica • Matt Schiffman • Arlen Schumer
Craig Shutt • Steve Sibra • Jon Signorelli
Rick Sloane • Gary Slusser • Chris Smith
J. David Spurlock • Larry Thomas
Lynn Woolley • Link Yaco

EDITORS EMERITUS
Stan Lee • Julie Schwartz

IN 1947 THE WORLD WAS RECOVERING FROM WAR. THE NEED FOR HEROES HAD WANED. AMERICA HAD LET DOWN HER GUARD-- BUT ONE GAL HADN'T...
SHADOW Lady
TM
WHO IS KILLING THE GREAT VOICE TALENTS OF RADIOLAND
YOWTCH!
CRUNCH!
THE VENTRILOQUIST
THE COMEDY TEAM
THE SINGING COWBOY
Find Out!
IN THE JANUARY NO. 17 ISSUE OF
BIG BANG COMICS
ON SALE IN MID-JANUARY!
COMICS BEEN THIS FUN
HAVEN'T IN FIFTY YEARS!

© 1997 TERRY CERNO

Exciting #35 & USA #13

I am writing in response to E. J. Petrie's letter in CBM #51, which does an excellent job of cataloguing the Alan Light Flashback reprints of Golden Age books. Mr. Petrie lists a group of Light reprints numbered 29 through 32, and says he's not sure if they exist. Well, I have two of them, #s 30 and 31, so those two, at least, exist. But, while #31 does in fact reprint Hit Comics #1, issue #30 reprints All-American #24, not Bulletman #1 as was apparently advertised.

Changing subjects, I noticed something interesting recently that I thought I'd share with CBM readers. Get out the Photo-Journal Guide and look at the covers for Exciting Comics #35 and USA Comics #13. Both, of course, are by Alex Schomburg. But what struck me it that these two covers are variations on the same theme: the hero (Captain America and the Black Terror) running over Japanese soldiers with a steamroller-like vehicle.

A comparison of the two covers is an interesting study of how Schomburg approached the same subject in different ways: then background and staging of the two scenes are essentially the same, down to one of the heroes driving the steamroller while the other fires a machine gun at the hapless enemy (although the position of the hero and his kid sidekick are reversed from one cover to the next). But the Timely cover is (characteristically) much more frenetic, crowded and generally "over the top" than the Nedor one; the Exciting cover suggests a moment frozen in time while the USA cover seems to be in perpetual motion. I think it's the comparative simplicity and more realistic nature of the Exciting cover that makes that one, to me, seem the more violent of the two, or at least the most disturbing (you actually see several Japanese soldiers being crushed under the steamroller's wheels).

USA #13 is dated Summer 1944, and Exciting #35 has an October 1944 cover date, suggesting that these two covers were produced at around the same time. Putting the two side by side provides a fascinating look at how the same artist can approach the same scene in two different, and singular, ways.

Keep up the great work. How about a Bronze Age theme issue some time soon?

Chris Gage, California

Renew now, read and savor later

Received CBM #52 in the mail today. In the envelope was a request to renew my subscription. In order to ensure that I do not miss an issue of such an excellent product, I filled out the renewal form, drafted a check and wrote this letter before even looking at your latest edition. Please renew my subscription. I look forward to another year of interesting and insightful articles on a childhood (and now an adult) passion. Keep up the good work.

Gregg L. Smith, Alabama

Request fulfilled Gregg. You should receive CBM through issue 65 without a hitch (unless of course the USPS decides to go on strike!)

A perplexing puzzle indeed

Once again I must say that I thoroughly enjoy Comic Book Marketplace each and every month. I have read articles about many topics that I otherwise never would have known existed, much less formed an appreciation for some things I have. One of the topics that comes up often, as it did in CBM #51, is that of the "Mile High" collection.

When I first started collecting comics I was a kid of 10 years old growing up in Norman, Oklahoma. I bought both new comics off the rack and back issues at a local comics shop (they were a new concept then). That was 1979. I collected until I headed off to college in 1987 and stayed out of touch with the hobby until I finished college and started making an income in 1994. Needless to say I was shocked by the changes that had occurred in the hobby during my absence! That Amazing Spider-Man #129 I bought in NM in 1983 for $1 sure was selling for a lot more in 1994. But, the biggest news to me was the news of the "Mile High" collection. I had not heard of it during my first period of collecting when I was a kid, but then again it made sense why. I was not the sort of collector that could afford those books then (OK, so I can't afford them now either), and honestly I wasn't attracted to anything pre-Spider-Man. But, now that I am older I am collecting a little Golden Age here and there, and really enjoying it. However, I must admit that I have a few reservations about the discovery of the "Mile High" collection.

I understand the historical significance of the "Mile High" books. I understand that some of the books are the best known copies around. I also understand that the discovery of the "Mile High" collection is a great story in comic book lore. But my problem is this: The selling of the collection at multiples of Guide began to justify the "I've got it and if you want it you are gonna pay for it" mentality that surfaces in the hobby.

So what do we do? Well, I for one vote with my dollar. If I go into a comic book shop and see Spectre #3 in GD selling for $75 I politely leave. I gave up a while back trying to talk to retailers about exorbitant prices, even when I see an obvious mistake (like a 1970's issue of Shield #1 priced as if it were the original Nick Fury Series), because most of the time they don't want to listen to me. Or, worse yet, they think I am trying to con them out of paying fair market value for a book. (And what is "fair market value"—well, some define it as "what someone is willing to

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE
12 issues for $60

Have CBM mailed right to your front door!

Mail check or MO payable to
Gemstone Publishing,
PO Box 180700, Coronado, CA 92178
MasterCard/Visa orders call
(619) 437-1996
(U.S FUNDS, MO & MD RESIDENTS ADD SALES TAX)

FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS:
Canada/Mexico $62, Great Britain/France/Norway/Germany/ Western Europe $110, Japan/Singapore/Philippines/Australia/Asian Pacific Rim $120 (All in U.S. Funds)

pay for a book"—like in the case of the "Mile Highs"—and others define it as what the (Overstreet) Guide states the value is. A perplexing puzzle indeed.) But, of course it works the other way, too. If I find a store that will price something fairly I return there repeatedly.

I appreciate the "Mile High" collection for what it is, and I feel part of that is the hobby of comics collecting lost its innocence because of the "Mile High" books. Thanks for listening, and I want to close with a request: How about an issue dedicated to the life of artist Matt Baker? I have the Phantom Lady issue of CBM, and I believe little is known about the life of Baker. I am sure that his life/career story would be an interesting read.

Brian St. John, Colorado

Extraordinary

Even for a fine publication like CBM, issue #51 seemed extraordinary, from the excellent Williamson cover to the color reproductions of Prince Valiant books and products.

I have a copy of the original Weird Science-Fantasy #25 with the Williamson cover, and I have a copy from Russ Cochran's Weird Science-Fantasy cover set framed and on my wall, but the coloring on your cover was exceptional. Did Al Williamson color it for you! It's too bad that proportions being what they are that you had to crop off the bottom of the illustration, including Al's distinctive signature box, but the important elements are there. I really love how you take these old covers and use them to showcase their graphic excellence for another generation of comic book fans.

Since the Silver Age of comics began when I was about 12 years old I was there for all of the early Schwartz books and remember the kind of excitement engendered when a character like The Atom or Green Lantern was revived. For me the absolute best was Hawkman, combining the fun of Gardner Fox' tricky scripting with the inimitable art of Joe Kubert. Because of its outstanding quality I've never understood why Hawkman was not the biggest success of all of DC's revivals, and I would like you to do an overview of these Kubert issues at some time in the future (if you haven't already done it, and if you have I'm sorry I missed it).

I love Michelle Nolan's articles. This particular article on "DC's Forgotten 44" was great. In those days I had about a dollar a week allowance to spend, and since my interests were varied it was hell to spin the comic book rack and see all kinds of books that I wanted, but which I had to pass on because I wanted the latest Kirby monster book, The Flash, or Uncle Scrooge. Even so, books in the Western genre or any kind of book with Pat Boone's picture on it would have been automatically passed over without a glance. Now, thanks to Michelle Nolan, I find—35 years late—that I was missing out. Anyway, Michelle's articles are very fun, even if they cause me to mentally kick my own butt for not paying attention all those years ago.

Par Holman, Utah

Phantom Magician & Patsy

As usual CBM #51 is another stunning issue! It's most encouraging to see that the giants of comicdom are being recognized and interviewed in depth. Two of my favorites I'd like to see featured one day are Bob Lubbers and John Severin.

A couple of corrections and clarifications I'd like to mention. In "The Superhero…Before Superman," Will Murray states that Mel Graff purloined the concept of Superman for his "Polly and Her Pals" strip. Yes, Graff introduced the Phantom Magician, a character Ron Goulart describes as the first costumed superhero, in a strip, but its title was "The Adventures of Patsy." The masked and caped character could fly, use magic, and become invisible on occasion. In mid-1935 the Phantom Magician and Patsy left the fantasy world where they were adventuring and returned to reality. The Magician traded his costume for a business suit and became Patsy's long-lost uncle.

That was a wonderful color spread on "Prince Valiant." Mark Magarity might be interested in the 1992 Manuscript Press book A Prince Valiant Companion which lists other collectibles. Magarity mentions Foster writing and illustrating A Young Knight-A tale of Medieval Times. The material for this was taken from the bottom tier of Foster's "Prince Valiant" page entitled "The Medieval Castle" which he wrote and drew from April 23, 1944 to November 25, 1945. Much of the same material was issued in 1957 by Hastings House as Medieval Castle. Although Foster art was used, the text is by someone else. The main character was called Arn, the same name Foster would choose for Val's son who was born in *Continued on page 76*

CBM Back Issues are still available...but act quickly!

#27 Witness, Ducks, Capt. Marvel Jr.
#36 Detective Dan, Baseball comics!
#41 Frazetta, Phantom, Horror, & Felix!
#42 Most Collectible Comics, Joe Kubert
#43 Comics go to the Movies, & more!
#44 Wally Wood, Amaz. Fantasy #16
#45 JLA, Steve Skeates, Banned in Canada!
#46 Atomic Genre, Pre-Code Horror, etc.
#49 Batman & Robin, Bat-Collectibles, etc.
#50 Julie Schwartz, Big Bang Theory, etc.
#51 Al Williamson, Julie Schwartz Part II, Prince Valiant collectibles
#52 Archie, All-Star, Schwartz Part III, Fox

SOLD OUT: 22-26, 28-35, 37-40, 47-48

All Back Issues are $7.50 ea. (post paid)
CA, MO, & MD residents add sales tax
MC/VISA orders: (619) 437-1996

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE
BACK ISSUES
P.O. BOX 180700
Coronado • CA • 92178-0700

Hey You! Websurfer...LOOK!

ORIGINAL ART FOR SALE

Comic Book & Comic Strip art, Pulp & Paperback Paintings, Pin-Ups, Science Fiction & Fantasy art

COMIC BOOKS FOR SALE

Platinum Age - Golden Age - Silver Age

Check out the web's coolest place for comics and comic art. - COMIC ART & GRAFFIX GALLERY VIRTUAL MUSEUM & ENCYCLOPEDIA has the most Original Comic Art & Classic Comic Books for sale anywhere!!!!! Over $1,000,000 of great collectibles from Comic Art & Graffix Gallery & Redbeard's Book Den. Two of the biggest names in the field.

What else? You can read about the history of comics, artist biographies, news about comics and you can even read classic golden age comics online in the reading room.

Best of all, it's FREE. Check it out today!

WWW.COMIC-ART.COM

You don't have online access? Get a copy of my art catalog with art by Hal Foster, Jack Kirby, Joe Kubert, Infantino, Crandall and many more by sending $4.00 to;

Richard Halegua - Comic Art & Graffix Gallery
POBox 46454 Las Vegas, NV 89114 702-233-3553

19th Century
Fantasy, Mystery, and Adventure!

By Pat S. Calhoun

The concept of popular fiction became possible with the mass-production of books and periodicals in the 19th Century. The fact that printed materials could be made cheaply enough to be sold to the rising "middle class" created a new kind of reader, a reader removed from the academic world of wealth and, hence, with no obligations to scholarship—a reader wanting to be entertained, a reader in search of fantasy, mystery, and adventure.

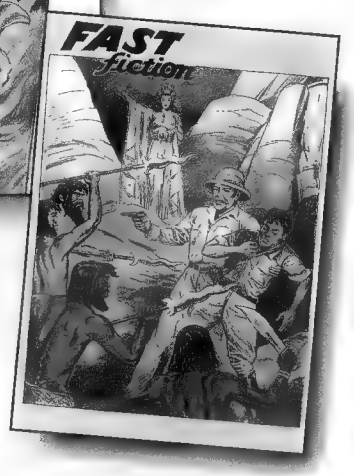
And with this new kind of reader came a new kind of writing—writing with an emphasis on action, color, romance, and suspense. Thus were begun trends that would culminate over a century later with the American pulps and comic books in that ultimate "golden age" of print media from the 1920s through the early 1960s. Many of the 19th Century pioneer popular fiction writers have had their classic works adapted into four-color form. The original books provided "blueprints" for entire genres, and the comic book versions are often worthwhile and a good way to get acquainted with the important forefathers of the great characters and stories of our century.

Sir Walter Scott of Edinburgh, Scotland all but invented the historical novel—anonymously—with books like *Waverly* (1814), *Rob Roy* (1817), and *Ivanhoe* (1819). His life story reads like something contemporary: his partnership in a publishing enterprise went bust in 1826 when an associate declared bankruptcy, and Scott felt bound to write frantically in an attempt to pay off the creditors—a path that led to breakdown and death. The 1952 adaptation of *Ivanhoe* by Fawcett is from their *Movie Comic* series—filtered through the script of the MGM film, but the story is strong enough to withstand the translation.

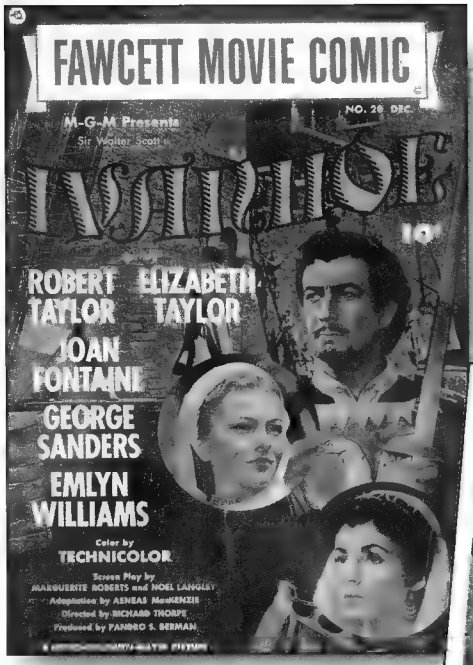
After the Third Crusade, Richard the Lion Heart, King of England, was taken captive by Leopold of Austria. Leopold made Richard's brother, John, a ransom offer, but John kept it secret—wanting the throne for himself. But the loyal knight Ivanhoe finds out the truth and sets out to raise the ransom and defend Saxon honor in a tournament against the Norman knights who have sided with Prince John.

Ivanhoe befriends an old Jew who offers to help solicit funds from his people, and as the money piles up so increases the treachery of John and the Normans—who take Ivanhoe's father and the Jew and his daughter captive. After a pitched battle the prisoners are freed, but then Rebecca the Jew is put on trial for witchcraft, and Ivanhoe proposes the case be settled by a trial of combat which pits him against the strongest of the Norman knights. It's gripping melodrama that moves with remarkable clarity, and the art is vivid and reinforces the medieval mood.

The mystery genre found one of its first and greatest detectives in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. In 1891 the *Strand Magazine* began running Sherlock Holmes stories as a regular monthly feature which quickly caught on with an ever-larger and more devoted readership for the next five years. (Ultimately, Conan Doyle penned 100 Holmes short stories and two novels.) Thus Holmes became an icon of the mystery genre whose legend has endured over a hundred years and whose



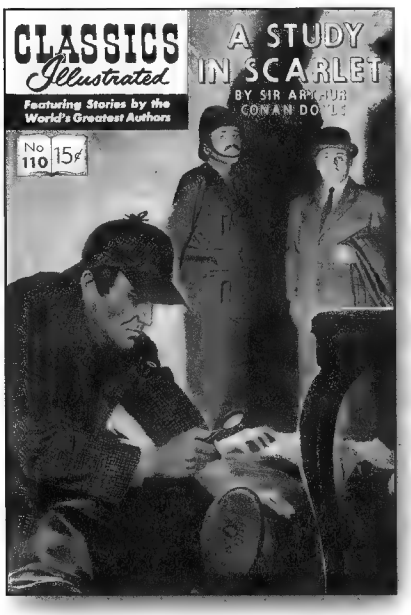
H.C. Kiefer, himself the master artist of many a 19th Century adaptation, created the front and back covers for Fast Fiction #3 (She, Dec 1949).



Fawcett Movie Comic #20 (Ivanhoe, Dec 1952) features a nicely arranged photo front cover and a beautiful portrait of Elizabeth Taylor on the back cover.

publication history serves as testament to the pattern of a series of stories about a hero appearing on a monthly basis.

Classics Illustrated #110 (first published in August 1953 and reprinted in 1962) adapted two of Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories. "A Study in Scarlet" is the series opener, which actually came out five years before the *Strand* began running the stories monthly. Narrated by Holmes' assistant Dr. John Watson, in a mix of wonder and admiration, the tale shows Holmes—called in when Scotland Yard is baffled by a bizarre murder—tracing the present-day crime back to a crime buried many years in the past, and this connection leads him to the killer. The four-color version is a solid thirty-pager that can be read and reread—subsequent readings allow one to savor Holmes' reasoning and Doyle's plotting. The art by Seymour Moskowitz adds its share to the excitement with crisp rendering and expressive staging.



The main characters on the cover of Classics Illustrated #110 (A Study in Scarlet, Aug 1953, 2nd printing 1962) bear some resemblance to 1940's Hollywood's Holmes and Watson—Basil Rathbone/Nigel Bruce. Shown here is the 1962 reprint.

The second story, "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," doesn't offer quite as dazzling a set of deductions as the first yarn, but it's still an interesting early variation on the "locked room" mystery, where the victim is found murdered in a sealed chamber which no one else could enter into or exit from.

H. Rider Haggard's *She* was published in 1887, two years after his *King Solomon's Mines* established him as the number one source for exciting tales of darkest Africa, with its lost races and centuries-hidden treasures. *She* is a spellbinding creation, a beautiful white woman who has used her magic to live for thousands of years in a lost city hidden inside a volcanic crater deep in the African interior. This comic version, from Seaboard's *Fast Fiction #3* (December 1950), is splendidly realized with graceful art by Vincent Napoli that fully captures the erotic wonder conjured by an ageless super-siren.

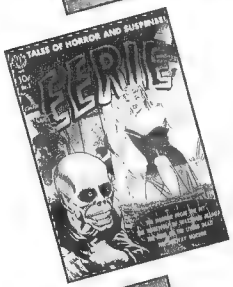
She is sought out—starting from London—by young Leo Vincey, who has just learned the family legend that names him as the reincarnation of Kallikrates, a prince of ancient Egypt slain two millennia ago by She. With his uncle, they venture to Africa and soon encounter the mystic queen and the attendant oddities and charms of her secret society in the volcanic valley.

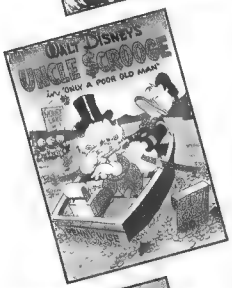
Vincey's quest for vengeance is forgotten as he falls under the seductive spell of the mighty sorceress. But fate steps in—as much an agent of cosmic retribution as handy plot twist—in an unforgettable finale. The comic book is thoroughly excellent, including the front and back covers by H. C. Kiefer.

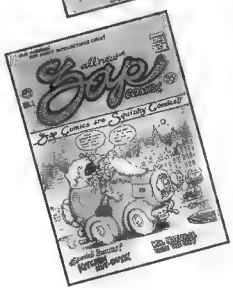
These three comic books all make superb statements of how the strong foundations laid by the 19th-Century popular fiction writers made possible those twin towers of 20th-Century "escape literature," the pulps and the comics.

Pat Calhoun and his family live in Santa Rosa, California. He has been collecting, researching and appreciating comic books since the early 1960s, and is a nationally recognized comic book historian.

BEDROCK CITY
COMIC COMPANY





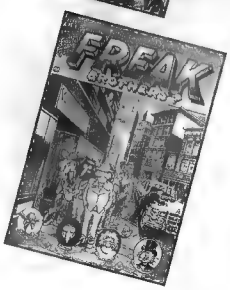


Golden Age
Silver Age

Atlas • EC • Horror
Fox • Avon • Sci-Fi
Romance • Good Girl
Western • Disney
Dell • Gold Key
Undergrounds
Alternatives
Small Press
Reprints

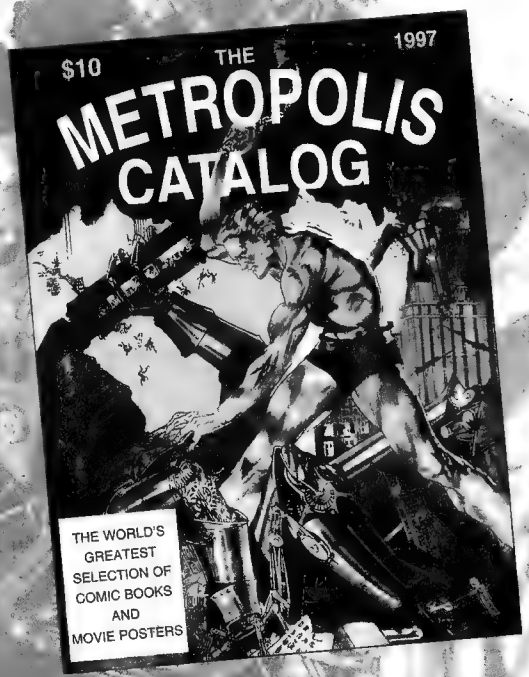
When you're in Houston
visit us at
6521 Westheimer • Houston • TX
(713) 780-0675
FAX (713) 780-2366

Visit our web site
www.bedrockcity.com
or e-mail us at
bedrock@flash.net



Rated #1 for 4 years by the Houston Press as the "best comic store in town"

the most FANTASTIC New Catalog you've seen in years!



Available NOW... from Metropolis Comics!

70,000
Golden Age & Silver Age Comics!

300
Big Pages!

Huge vintage Movie Poster Section !

Metropolis Collectibles, Inc., 873 Broadway, Ste 201, NY, NY 10003
Phone: 212-260-4147 FAX: 212-260-4304
CBM Special: Only $5 if ordered before Dec. 1st (regularly $10)
(Credit Cards accepted - all foreign orders, please add $10)

Metropolis means...
Fantastic VARIETY! Fantastic QUALITY!
Fantastic SERVICE!

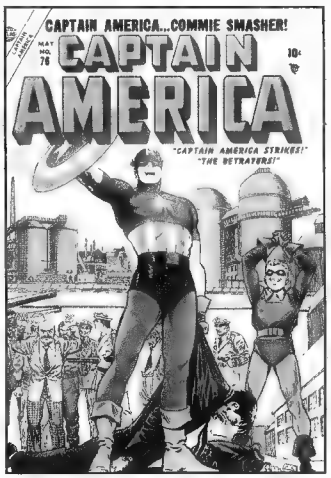
The Forgotten Reincarnations of...

Captain America

The Silver Age just may have started years before Showcase #4!

Many, if not most, Silver Age collectors are aware that Captain America made a brief return to Marvel Comics only four years after his last Golden Age appearance in 1949.

What isn't often realized in retrospect, however, is that not only was Captain America the first Golden Age hero to return from any company (along with the Human Torch and the Sub-Mariner, all in *Young Men* #24, December 1953), but the good Captain was the only patriotic hero of the 1940s to make a comeback during the decade following 1949.



It wasn't until a new version of The Shield appeared in two issues from Archie Comics in 1959 (with the downright unmarketable title *The Double Life of Private Strong*) that another revival of a patriotic hero occurred. A few new or revived costume heroes briefly dotted the comics landscape in the mid to late 1950s, along with the surviving stalwarts from DC Comics, but the attempt to revive Captain America was indeed a unique experiment.

The Captain and his partner, Bucky, appeared in 16 stories in 10 different issues from Marvel (more commonly known as Atlas in the 1951-57 period because of the familiar Atlas Globe, which represented the firm's distribution company).

There were three Cap stories apiece in *Captain America* #76-78 and one each in *Young Men* #24-28 and *Men's Adventures* #27-28, which also featured the Human Torch and Sub-Mariner (see the accompanying sidebar for details). It should be noted here that the other Atlas revival issues, *Sub-Mariner* #33-42 and *Human Torch* #36-38, did not contain any Captain America stories. (Many thanks to the king of Atlas collectors, Jim Vadenboncoeur, Jr., for making this column complete by providing the art credits and the loan of the comics. "King" doesn't do Jim justice—he has a complete collection of serious Atlas comics, the only such collection known to exist.)

Make no mistake about the significance of Captain America. I would "bet the farm" that more collectors would like to own a run of *Captain America* #1-75 than any other Golden Age title except maybe Batman. All in all, this icon appeared in 261 Golden Age stories in a variety of Timely/Marvel titles from 1941-49.

None of the stories in *Captain America* #76-78 have been reprinted to the best of my knowledge, but six of the seven tales in *Young Men* and *Men's Adventures* were reprinted during the late 1960s in one of Marvel's squarebound largely reprint titles, *Marvel Super Heroes*.

In addition, a short while back Marvel reprinted the entire issue of *Young Men* #25 (#24 would have seemed more logical).

All 10 of these 1950's issues with Captain America are tough to find, with most copies salted away in permanent collections. The *Gerber Photo-Journal* gives *Captain America* #76 and 78 a 6 and #77 a 5 (all above-average scarcity), along with 6s for *Men's Adventures* #27 and 28. *Young Men* #24, though, somehow rates only a 4, with the other issues of *Young Men* rating no better than a 5.

Perhaps these are accurate scarcity ratings, but just try to find these comics! They may not be scarce in the sense that at least a

By Michelle Nolan

CARL BURGOS DREW the covers of Men's Adv. #27 (May 1954, below) and #28 (Jul 1954).

TWO UNKNOWN ARTISTS drew the cover of Cap #76 (May '54, previous).

couple hundred or more of each issue may exist, but not many are available because they too are locked up in collections. Collectors simply don't want to part with these gems!

In fact, in a recent *CBM* survey, *Young Men* #24 was rated No. 1 in future desirability by collectors. That's not surprising, considering the consistent popularity of Timely/Marvel titles and the fact that, in a very meaningful way, a case could be made that the Silver Age actually started with *Young Men* #24!

However, in the entertaining and generally informative book Marvel by Les Daniels (1991, Abrams), only a few lines are devoted to the brief return of Captain America and the work of John Romita, who drew the character during much of his brief reincarnation and who much later gained its greatest fame with Spider-Man.

The Captain America of the 1940s often starred in long, colorful adventures. They were some of the most kinetic comics of the Golden Age, simply bursting with energy and colorful ideas. In a sad comparison, the Cap of the 1950s got little exposure. The three stories in each of the three issues of his own title were only six pages apiece, and the other seven tales were no longer than seven pages.

In fact, for some reason Atlas tried a lot harder to push The Human Torch, who was featured on all the covers of *Young Men* #24-28 and *Men's Adventures* #27-28. Cap appeared in a little box at the bottom of *Young Men* #24-25 and, of course, on the covers of *Captain America* #76-78, but that was it for cover exposure.

In other words, Ajax's revival of Fox's *Phantom Lady*—which began a four-issue run just after the end of Captain America's revival—received more cover exposure!

In much the same way that the Blackhawks turned from battling the Nazis in the 1940s to fighting the communists in the 1950s, Cap's 16 revival stories were exclusively oriented to coping with the communist menace. Cap and Bucky did so in every story.

What gave Cap's 16 tales of the 1950s some semblance of variety was that they were often set in a wide variety of locales, ranging from a "small European country" to the United Nations in New York to Korea, Egypt, South Africa, Alaska, Communist China and Indo-China (as Vietnam was then known). Cap even battled two female spies, à la the femme fatales so often found in Blackhawk, and also met the Red Skull in two brief skirmishes (the comeback tale in *Young Men* #24 and the story in *Young Men* #27, in which the Red Skull supposedly dies).

The story in *Young Men* #27 has not been reprinted to the best of my knowledge, probably because the portrayal of the Red Skull is so much different than is normally acknowledged in the Marvel canon. In addition, the art (probably by Bill Benulis) would have seemed odd to most Marvel fans of the late 1960s, when the other Captain America stories from *Young Men* and *Men's Adventures* were all reprinted in Marvel Super Heroes (see reprint listing along with the other data of Captain America).

CBM CHECKLIST

Captain America of the 1950s

Captain America #76 (May 1954, cover by two different artists, identities uncertain).

"The Betrayers" 6 pages (pencils probably by Bill Benulis, inks by ??)...Cap and Bucky (who appears in all stories with Cap) along with reporter Betsy Ross battle a communist spy on an Army base.

"Captain America Strikes" 6 pages (art by John Romita, signed)... Betsy Ross appears; Cap battles communists in a "small country between the lands behind the iron curtain and the free world."

"Come to the Commies" 6 pages (pencils probably by Benulis, inks by ??)...Cap supports the French cause and battles communists in Indo-China.

Captain America #77 (Jul 1954, cover by Romita)
"You Die at Midnight" 6 pages (pencils by Romita, unsigned; inks by ??)...Cap battles communist spies at a shipyard.

"The Man With No Face" 6 pages (art by Romita, signed)...Cap battles communist spies in New York's Chinatown.

Untitled Captain America story, 6 pages (art by Romita, signed)...Cap battles communists in South Korea.

Captain America #78 (Sep 1954, cover by Romita)
"His Touch is Death" 6 pages (art by Romita, signed)... Cap battles communist super villain Electro in New York City.

"The Green Dragon" 6 pages (art by Romita, signed)...Cap battles communists in mainland China in a story with a supernatural solution.

"The Hour of Doom" 6 pages (art by Romita, signed)...Cap battles communist spies at the United Nations.

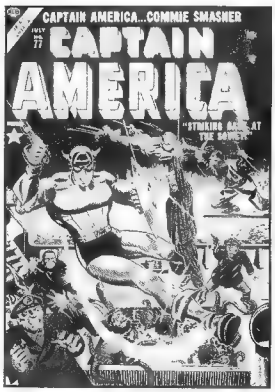
Interestingly, the Human Torch and Sub-Mariner make cameo appearances in the Cap story in *Young Men* #26, the only such grouping to occur in any of the 23 Atlas revival issues. Although they appear in only a few panels together, the grouping represents the embryonic concept of the modern Marvel Universe! Even more intriguing, outside of DC it's the only teamup, however brief, of unrelated costumed heroes during the entire decade of the 1950s!

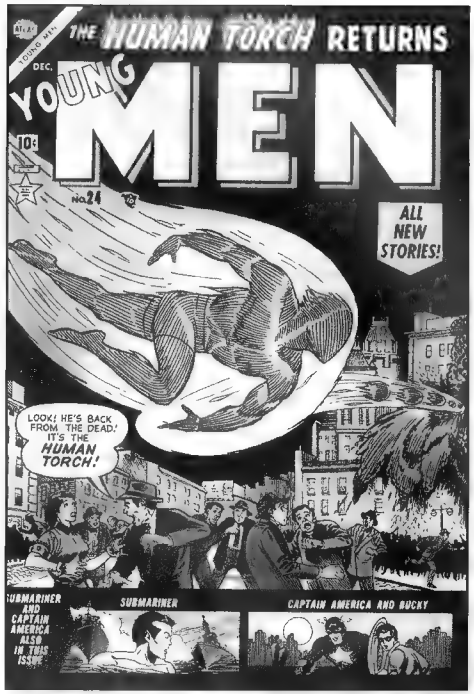
However, the Cap stories of the 1950s were never long enough for any real plot or character development—although it is amazing how much plot editor/writer Stan Lee could put into a six or seven page story! This may have contributed to making them seem unimportant in the minds of the readers, many of whom probably didn't remember the Cap of the 1940s. In those days, most comic book publishers figured they got a whole new generation of readers every six or seven years, since many youngsters of 8 or 10 no longer read comics at 14 or 16.

At any rate, Superman and Batman must have seemed a lot more important, appearing as they did in longer stories including the monthly 12-pagers in *Action* and *Detective Comics*. Atlas, though, specialized in short stories—most of the stories in the company's multitude of horror, war, western and romance comics were only four or five pages long. Many of those stories are absolute gems of compact plot, but that format works better with general fiction than it does with continuing characters, especially figures as colorful as superheroes.

In a rare 1950's nod to continuity, editor Lee did use the three stories in *Young Men* #24 to explain how and why Captain America, The Human Torch and Sub-Mariner were back. (It's interesting to note that what would have been dragged out into a mini-series in the 1990s... was told in a six-page Cap story in *Young Men* #24.) Even then, however, Cap's six-page epic was the briefest of the comeback stories.

STILL IN HIGH DEMAND and nearly impossible to find in unrestored high grade, **Young Men #24 (Dec 1953) introduced the 1950s incarnations of Cap, Torch, and Submariner.**





THE LEGENDARY JOHN ROMITA, SR. drew the covers of **Capt. America #77 (Jul 1954, left) and #78 (Sep 1954), the last Atlas issue.**

Men's Adventures #27 (May 1954, Human Torch on cover) "The Girl Who Was Afraid" 7 pages (reprinted in Marvel Super Heroes #14 (May 1968, art by Mort Lawrence, signed)...Cap battles communist spies in Egypt and foils female spy Shika.

Men's Adventures #28 (Jul 1954, Human Torch on cover) "Kill Captain America" 7 pages (reprinted in Marvel Super Heroes #12 (Dec 1967, art by Romita, signed)...Cap battles communists in Korea.

Young Men #24 (Dec 1953) "Back from the Dead" 6 pages (reprinted in Marvel Super Heroes #20, May 1969, art by Fred Kida, unsigned)...Cap's origin is recapped and he foils the Red Skull, now working for the Kremlin, in a communist plot as the United Nations.

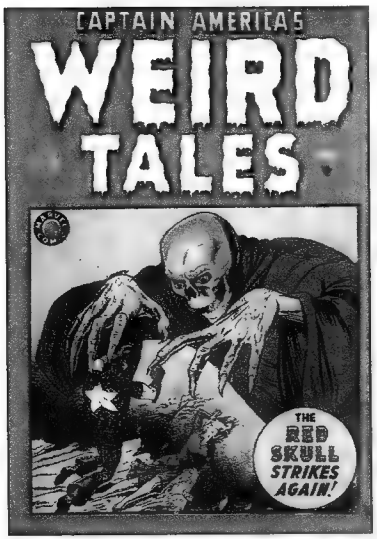
Young Men #25 (Feb 1954) "Top Secret" 7 pages (reprinted in Marvel Super Heroes #13 (Mar 1968, art by Romita, signed)...Cap battles female communist spy Lupa Lupoff, also known as The Executioner, at the Nevada proving grounds.

Young Men #26 (Mar 1954) "Captain America Turns Traitor" 7 pages (reprinted in Marvel Super Heroes #15 (Jul 1968, art by Romita, signed)...The Human Torch and Sub-Mariner make cameo appearances and Cap battles communist spies in Alaska.

Young Men #27 (Apr 1954) "Return of the Red Skull" 7 pages (art probably by Bill Benulis)...The Red Skull supposedly dies after he lures Cap into a trap near his Army base.

Young Men #28 (Jun 1954) "The Cargo of Death" 7 pages (reprinted in Marvel Super Heroes #16 (Sep 1968, art by Romita, signed)...Cap foils communist dope smugglers at a South African port.

Ultimately, the "communist under every rock" mentality of the McCarthy era began to fade away with the end of the Korean War in 1953 (or, to be more accurate, the end of the fighting). Old Joe McCarthy himself was censured by his Senate colleagues in 1954, and the domestic tensions eased considerably. The Cold War lingered for a good many years, but the threat of communism was never taken as seriously in comics after the introduction of the Comics Code, which prevented overtly violent stories (and overtly racist portrayals of Asians).



AMAZINGLY, CAP'S WEIRD TALES #75 (Feb 1950; see color section) contains no Captain America... and is instead an early Atlas horror comic. Cap's last appearance was in the previous issue published four months earlier (#74, Oct 1949; above), which was the first issue to use "Weird Tales" in the title. In #74, Cap appeared in one 6-page tale of the Red Skull presented along side other horror stories.

By the way, this is an ideal opportunity to point out a common misconception: That Timely/Marvel/Atlas was a relatively minor player in the 1950's comic book stakes until the suddenly famed firm burst forth with Lee and Co.'s then-unique conception of the superhero during the height of the Silver Age. Nothing could be further from the truth.

By the end of World War II in 1945—six years after magazine publisher Martin Goodman began to publish comic books—his Timely/Marvel was solidly entrenched as a major force in comic book publishing. DC led all publishers in 1945 with 143 issues, followed by Dell and Timely with 113—the only other publishers over 100 that year (all counts in this column are courtesy of Dan Stevenson, one of the finest and most exacting of all indexers and one of the most accomplished collectors in the world).

Marvel was #4 in 1947 with 130 issues, #2 in 1948 with 212... *and #1* in 1949 with 271, a full 42 issues more than runner-up DC and 49 more than Dell, although it is probable that both DC and Dell sold more comic books since they had more characters who were already American icons. Even here, though, some sources say that Marvel outsold everybody on occasion.

I feel that the Daniels book is clearly in error, however, when it states that "By 1950, Marvel had become the consummate comic book factory, producing an incredible total of 82 separate titles on a monthly schedule." That, obviously, was never the case in the history of the company, as we will show.

In fact, 1950 was a year of turmoil for the company, which shortly before, during or after 1950 did, as the Daniels book details, switch from staff-based artists to freelance artists. In that respect, Goodman was decades ahead of similar practices in many areas of American business.

At any rate, Marvel did publish the amazing total of 86 titles in 1950, but they covered only 187 issues as the company temporarily fell to fourth behind Fawcett (which was briefly dominant), DC and Dell. In other words, Marvel was at loose ends, publishing most of its titles on a quarterly basis at best and averaging only 15 or 16 issues per month. The only titles with as many as six issues were *Patsy Walker* (six) and *Miss America starring Patsy Walker* (seven).

But, with Goodman's creation of Atlas Distribution in 1951, the company began to prosper as never before. From 1951 through 1956, right through the turmoil of the Wertham years and the creation of the Comics Code Authority late in 1954, Atlas led all publishers in number of issues every year, ranging from 305 to 1951 to an amazing 431 in 1956.

Do you realize that through the 1960s, no comic book company ever published as many as 431 issues in a single year? The Atlas of 1956 is mind-boggling—and this during a period when comic books supposedly did not prosper! So much for myths.

Once again, it should be emphasized this doesn't mean Atlas sold the most comics, but it obviously was a dominant company, along with its infamous men's magazine empire. However, I would guess that Western Publishing, under its Dell Publishing Company imprint, actually sold the most comic books in 1956.

It wasn't until the Atlas implosion of the Summer of 1957—caused by a complicated series of distribution company problems—that Atlas surrendered the distinction of being No. 1. The company finished with 351 issues that year, still finishing a strong third behind DC and Dell. But Atlas published only two issues dated October 1957 (*Patsy Walker* #73, which was the first issue without the Atlas Globe, and *Dippy Duck* #1, which was the last issue with the fondly remembered symbol), followed by eight issues each in November and December under a publishing and distribution agreement Goodman reached with DC's Independent News Company. From that point, Goodman and Lee slowly found ways to rebuild their comic book line. They were limited to 96 issues in 1958 and 96 in 1959 (eight each month), but they gradually found ways to expand their output every single year through 1969, when Marvel emerged as No. 2 in the industry with 249 issues (DC published 366 that year). That was the end of the Silver Age and the beginning of Marvel's domination of the industry.

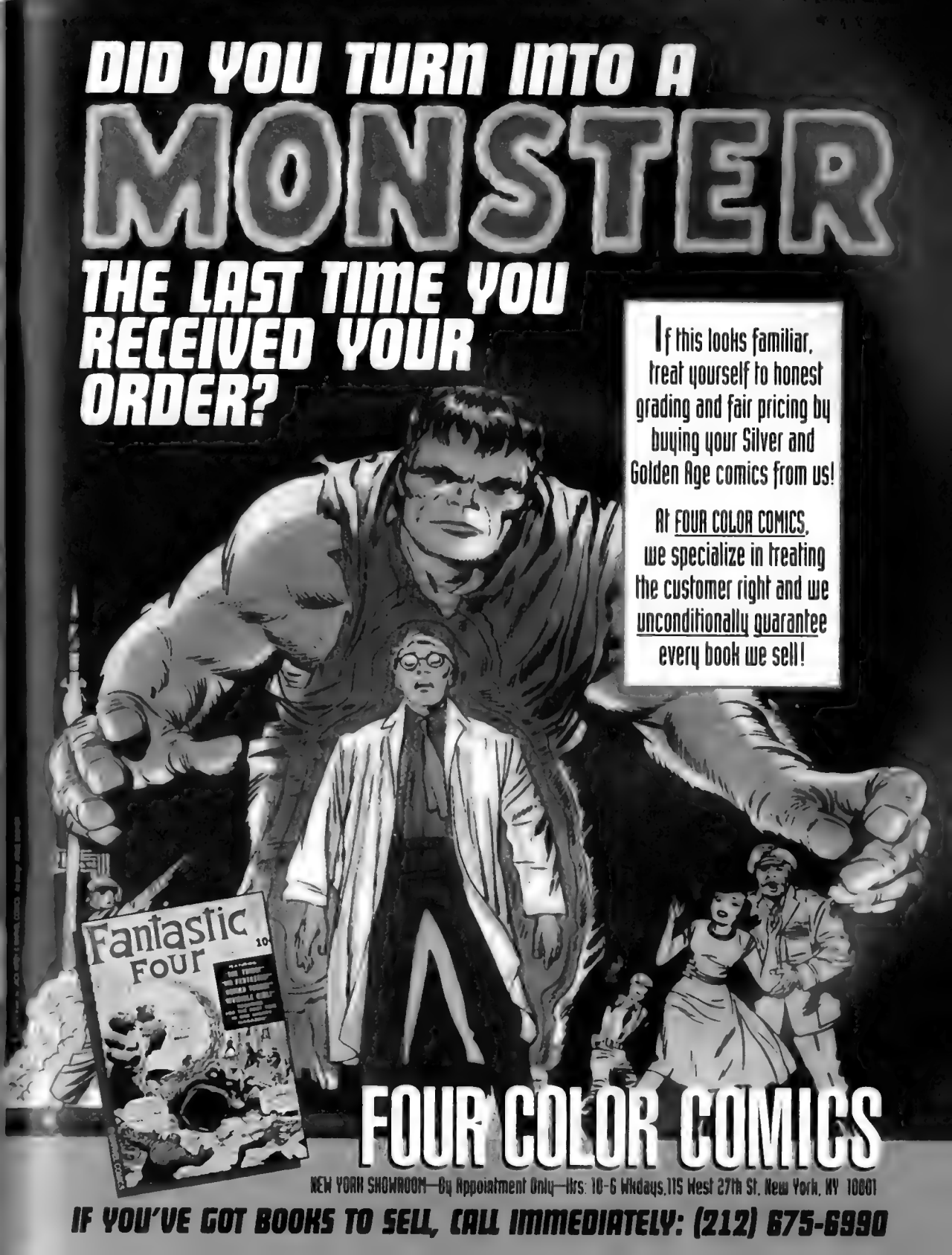
But it took Marvel a long time to hit the heights, more than a decade after it once again began publishing superheroes in 1961. In fact, DC published more than twice as many comic books during the 1960s as Marvel—3,577 to 1,655. Charlton was second during the '60s, Harvey was third, Marvel was fourth, and Gold Key was fifth. In contrast, Marvel published 3,011 comics during the 1950s, and were it not for the 1957 implosion, the company would have far surpassed DC (3,396) and Dell (3,386).

Atlas/Marvel of the 1950s–not Marvel of the 1960s–was the real force on the comic book publishing scene! But, in contrast to his status as once-and-future icon, Captain America was, alas, only a brief pre-Code experiment during the 1950's Atlas empire.

DID YOU TURN INTO A MONSTER THE LAST TIME YOU RECEIVED YOUR ORDER?

If this looks familiar, treat yourself to honest grading and fair pricing by buying your Silver and Golden Age comics from us!

At FOUR COLOR COMICS, we specialize in treating the customer right and we unconditionally guarantee every book we sell!



FOUR COLOR COMICS

NEW YORK SHOWROOM—By Appointment Only—Hrs: 10-6 Wkdays.115 West 27th St. New York, NY 10001

IF YOU'VE GOT BOOKS TO SELL, CALL IMMEDIATELY: (212) 675-6990

Christie's East

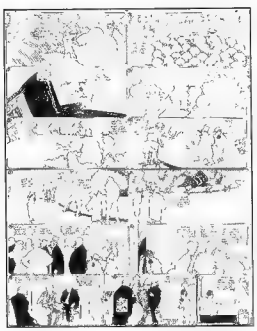
PRESENTS

Comic Collectibles & Animation Art

Property belonging to Warner Brothers Studios and Chuck Jones,
Layout drawing signed by Chuck Jones
estimate $1,500.00-$2,000.00

Fantastic Four #57
Newly discovered original cover art by
Jack Kirby/Joe Sinnott
estimate $12,000-15,000

Walt Disney Studios
Pinocchio 1940
Production set-up
estimate $20,000-$30,000



Little Nemo in Slumberland
Poster by
Winsor McCay
estimate $18,000-$22,000

Property from the collection of Jeff Lotman
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs 1937
Key Production set-up
estimate $15,000-$20,000.00

Captain America
Poster recreation
by Jim Steranko
estimate $10,000-$15,000

VIEWING

December 13, 10 AM-5 PM
December 14, 1 PM-5 PM
December 15, 12PM-7PM
December 16, 10AM-5 PM
December 17, 10 AM-5 PM

Auction: Thursday, December 18, 1997
Animation Art at 10 AM
Comic Collectibles at 2 PM
Christie's East
219 East 67th Street
New York, New York 10021

Catalogues: (800) 395-6300
For Sale Information,
please call Simeon Lipman
for Comics Collectibles and
Elyse Luray-Marx for Animation Art
at (212) 606-0543

Christie's on-line: www.christie's.com

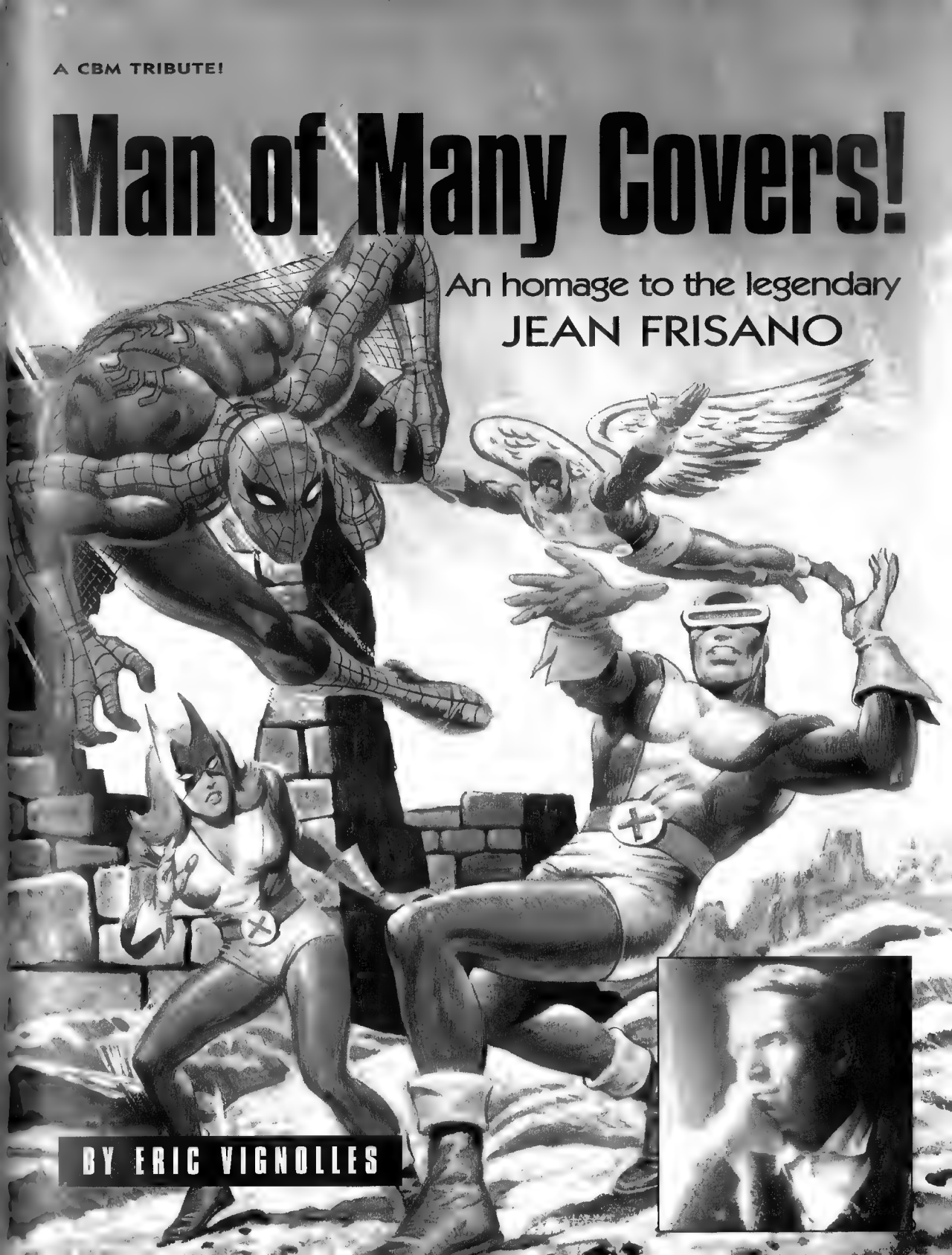
Principal Auctioneer: Cathy Eikies #0866011

Christie's East

A CBM TRIBUTE!

Man of Many Covers!

An homage to the legendary JEAN FRISANO



BY ERIC VIGNOLLES

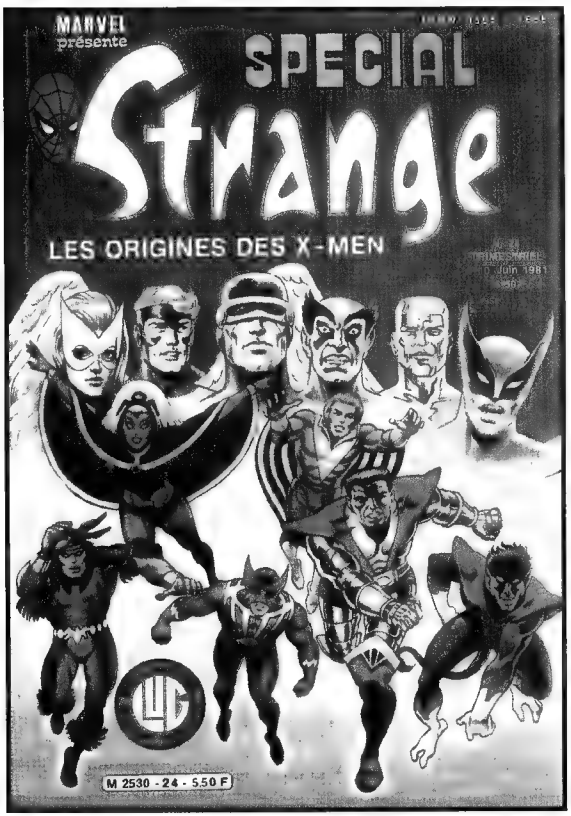
JUST A QUICK GLANCE AT PAGE B-8 IN ERNST GERBER'S *Photo-Journal Guide to Marvel Comics* reveals an array of Marvel reprints from various countries. Among the covers reproduced, only one stands out as not being a Marvel-produced cover, and as being painted to boot: the third from left, top row, for the French publication called *Strange* (there's another non-Marvel cover, for the French title *Spidey*, but it's not painted). Perhaps a little historical account is called for here.

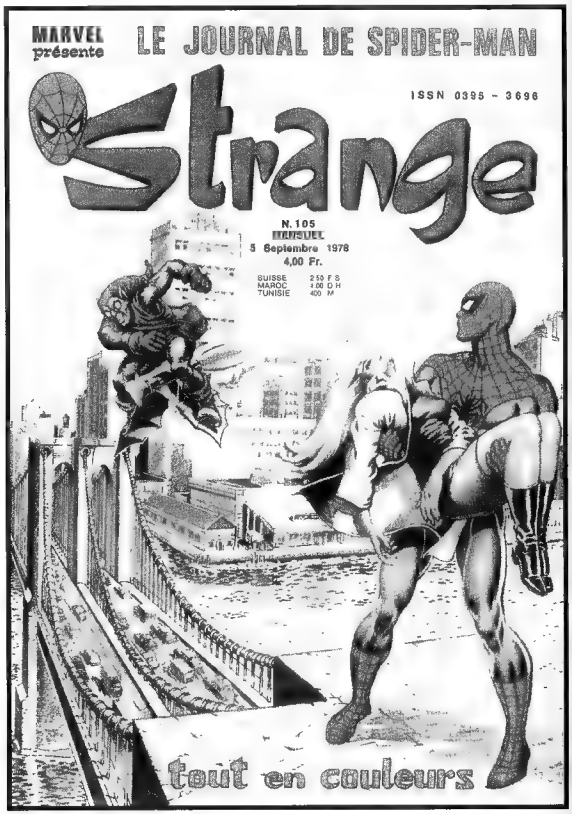
Up until 1969, Marvel Comics still hadn't made any foray into the French comics market. Since 1939, there had already been material reprinted from other companies such as National (Batman, Superman), All-American (Green Lantern), Fox (The Flame, Blue Beetle), Centaur (Amazing Man, Masked Marvel, Chuck Hardy), Quality Comics Group (Black Condor), Street & Smith (The Shadow), all those mainly courtesy of two French companies, S.A.G.E. and Del Duca.

But in 1949, with the passing of a censorship code similar to the US Comics Code of 1954, the careers of these mystery men and superheroes were stopped short, leaving Timely one of the few major companies whose characters had not been used in France. Not until February 1958 did American characters become common wares on French newsstands again, with the gradual reprinting of Silver Age superheroes such as John Jones, Green Arrow and Speedy, Aquaman, and Flash, in digest-size black and white publications.

Flashback to 1950. That year, Auguste Alban Vistel and Marcel Navarro set up Les Editions LUG in Lyons, Southeast France (the name of the company is short for Lyons' Latin name, Lugdunum). LUG soon specialized in French and Italian material, mostly western digests. Eighteen years later, Auguste Vistel's daughter, Claude, a fluent speaker of English, contacted Trans-World Features Syndicate in New York and acquired the publishing rights to some of Marvel's characters. The first to be selected were Fantastic Four (Les Quatre Fantastiques), Silver Surfer (Le Surfer d'Argent), and Spider-Man (L'Homme-Araignée), all of which were gathered into one single title, *Fantask*, a monthly publication in color starting February 5, 1969. But *Fantask* was charged with being "too violent" by the board of censors and lasted only seven issues.

At the very beginning of America's Bronze Age (January 1970), Les Editions LUG made a second attempt with *Strange*, a digest reprinting X-Men, Daredevil, Iron Man, and Silver Surfer stories. Fortunately, this one was not deemed "harmful to young minds" by the censors, and turned into a comic book-sized publication beginning with issue #11. Although *Strange* has changed hands (it is now published by Semic) and doesn't contain Marvel material anymore since Marvel set foot in continental Europe in January 1997 in a partnership with Panini, the title (now publishing DC material) remains a favorite with superhero fans and holds the record for being published continuously for 27 years.





Numerous titles followed in the wake of *Strange*, among which Marvel (also killed off by censorship), *Spécial Strange* (which published the new X-Men), *Titans, Nova, Spidey* along with many glossy-covered prestige albums featuring Fantastic Four, Spider-Man, Ka-Zar or Conan.

What these titles have in common is more than 400 painted covers produced by a French artist who never signed any of them: Jean Frisano.

Mystery Cover Painter

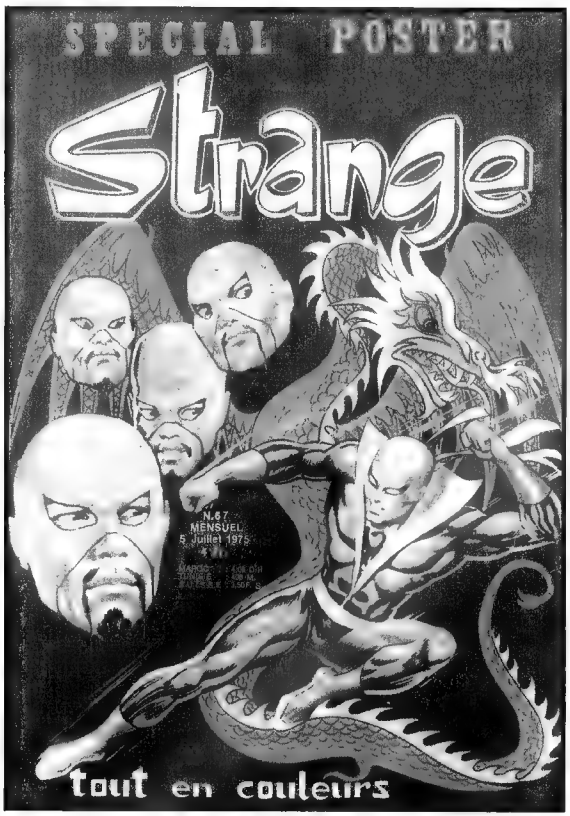
MOST CREDIT JEAN FRISANO AS THE FIRST ARTIST TO LEND A THREE-dimensional look to Marvel characters which ordinarily appeared as line drawings. Often basing his paintings on original covers or inside panels, Jean Frisano added his eye for color and contrast. Once printed, the result was often spectacular… and sure to maintain LUG's superior sales by beating out their competitors.

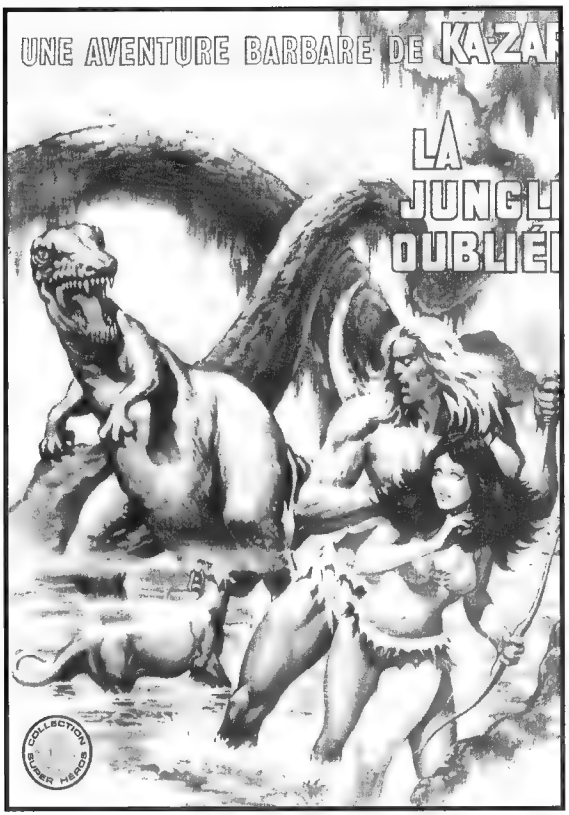
Jean Henri Frisano was born in Gagny (Seine-St. Denis) on May 6, 1927. Of the five Frisano children, Jean proved to be the one with the strongest artistic inclinations, and his passion for American masters Hal Foster, Alex Raymond, and Milton Caniff led him to enter a Parisian art school in 1943. His schooling completed, he was hired by a Parisian comics house, S.A.G.E., and began his career in 1948, at age 21, as a cover artist (he did almost 200 there) and as an artist on several strips (Fils de la Prairie–Son of the Prairies–, Togar, Tinto). He was also responsible for the hiring of his younger brother, Pierre, who became at age 15, the youngest French comic book artist ever… producing covers for French reprints of Fawcett's Captain Marvel.

Jean eventually left S.A.G.E. and went working for other publications, including S.P.E., Ray-Flo, and S.E.P.I. In 1954 he stopped working for comics and went down to Southeastern France, on the Riviera, where he established himself as a ceramist. In 1956 he met his wife-to-be, Sylvia Galbiati, with whom he would later have two children, Sylvia and Thomas.

The urge to draw brought him back to magazines again, this time doing illustrations for magazines such as *Confidences* (a womens' magazine). In 1968 he presented his portfolio to Les Editions LUG. Jean refused to draw strips, which were too time-consuming, but became the house cover artist, his work adorning titles of all genres—western, adventure, jungle, science fiction, movie adaptations, and, of course, superhero. He did more than 1,200 covers for LUG, nearly half of which were painted! None were signed, not because the publisher feared that recognition would lead the artist to ask for a raise (as S. M. Iger did), but amazingly… out of sheer modesty.

Frisano's first cover featuring superheroes was for the last issue of *Fantask*, published August 15, 1969. Based on a scene by Gene Colan, it was a line drawing depicting Mr. Fantastic battling the Super Skrull. He would continue to produce covers for Marvel, then for *Strange* beginning with issue





#21. For his first superhero painted cover, he took inspiration from a John Buscema rendition of the Silver Surfer, which he turned into an acrylic painting featuring Spider-Man, used for *Strange* #25 (January 5, 1972). The result was a beauty to behold: the character was given a new dimension, his muscles were subtly delineated, the fabric of his costume glistened under the light. Highly praised by the readers, Frisano would later (beginning with *Strange* #34) produce paintings only.

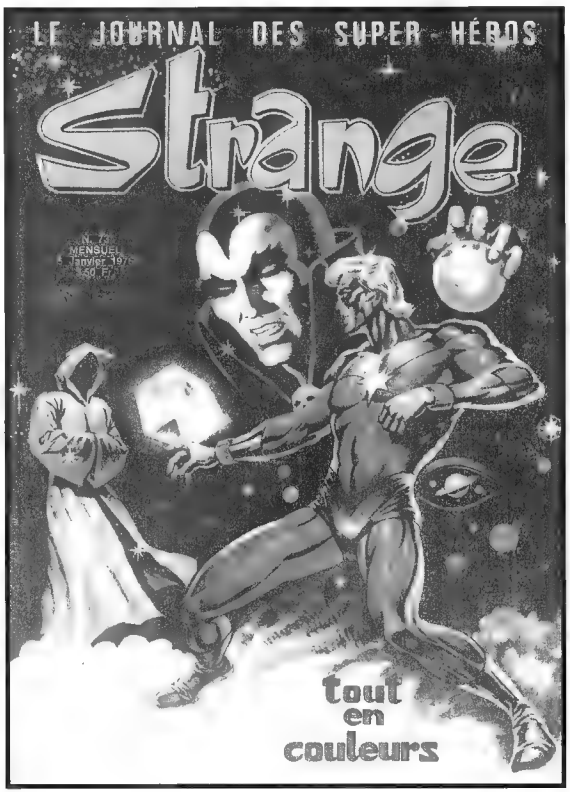
No character was left untouched by his brush… Spider-Man, Iron Man, Daredevil, X-Men, Silver Surfer, Iron Fist, Captain Marvel, Alpha Flight, New Mutants, Fantastic Four, Doc Savage, Ka-Zar, Dazzler, Rom, and even Conan (for which John Buscema was to praise Frisano during a trip to France). In 1977, his son, Thomas, true to his father, began lending a hand helping him produce his usual rate of five painted covers per month.

The adventure lasted until August 9, 1987—the day Jean Frisano died.

Never has an artist left such a mark on the whole line of publications for so long. While some names are forever associated with legendary title runs (such as Margaret Brundage and *Weird Tales*, Frank R. Paul and *Amazing Stories*, and Alex Schomburg and Timely's titles) Jean Frisano made a lasting impression on the minds of several generations of the readers of *Strange*, France's most popular publication.

For this, he will not go forgotten.

Translated from the French language by Tristan Lapoussière.



The late great French cover master, Jean Frisano at his drawing table during the 1980s. Inset page 21: A rare early photograph of Frisano (sans mustache) taken in the 1950s.

View hundreds of high grade items on our website:

www.viabuys.com

VIA vintage investment associates

Contact Jason Ewert, VP Purchasing/Sales:
P.O. Box 354 Eastpointe, MI 48021
E-Mail: help@viabuys.com

We gladly accept credit cards!

Or, for a complete list of our inventory, phone us toll free:
1 888 VIABUYS
or FAX us:
201-689-1490

Action #38
VF/NM $1500

Action
23 PR $295
29 FR $195

Adventure
35 FR/PR $215
47 VG $795
73 FR $1050
210 FR $260
290 VF/NM $195

AA Men of War
20 NM- $300

All Star
1 PR $990
8 G/VG $4500

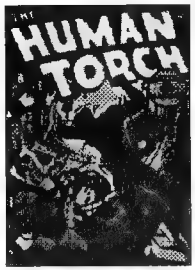
All Winners
2 FR $400
14 VF+ $1200

All-Flash
1 FR $1050

All-Select
9 G+ $220

Beyond
13 VF/VF+ $85
14 VF+ $90

Black Terror
13 VF/NM $495



Human Torch #8
VF+ $4000

Captain America
6 VF/NM $6800
11 G/VG $620
12 VG+ $875
19 VF+ $2450
27 VG+ $525
28 G+ $395
28 FR $225
32 FR $175
45 G/VG $290
54 FN $495
58 NM $2400

Catman
21 G $195
23 PR $60

Detective
10 VG/FN $3100
19 FR $795
35 App. VG $1300
38 PR $1795
38 App. G/VG ... $3500
40 FR+ $595
140 PR/FR $310
225 VG $1750
227 VF/VF+ $550
357 VF+ $52

DD Battles Hitler
1 PR/FR $890

Dime
1 VG- $250

Strange Tales #110
"Western Penn."
NM $4950

Fantastic Four
1 NM-'Cert.' $24,500
1 App.VF+ $9750
11 NM- $725
15 VF+ $295
16 NM- $375
17 VF+ $350
18 VF+ $350
19 NM- $395
21 VF+ $195
22 VF+ $175
23 NM- $195
24 NM- $225
26 NM- $650
28 NM- $385
30 VF+ $165
31 VF+ $165
32 VF+ $165

Fighting Yank
3 G+ $100
9 VG+ $130
12VG+ $150
13 VF/NM $475

Flash (S.A & G.A)
7 FR $350
14 FR/G $210
24 FR $160
24 VG- $375
47 PR/FR $75
130 VF/NM $165
142 VF+ $90
153 VF+ $60

TOS #39
"Bethlehem"
NM $7500

Frontier Fighters
5 NM- $375

Frontier Western
9 VF+ $100

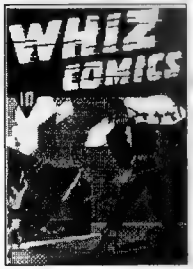
Funny Picture Stories
Vol. 1, #1 FN $1600

Funny Stuff
12 VF/NM $155

Green Hornet
36 VF/NM $450
41 NM- $325
42 VF $200

Green Lantern
16 VF+ $160
21 VF+ $140
24 VF+ $140
25 VF+ $150
26 VF/NM $140
33 VF/NM $120
35 NM $160
41 VF/NM $80
42 NM $100
50 NM- $95
54 VF/NM $65
60 VF/NM $42

Hello Pal
1 VF+ $450
3 VF+ $375



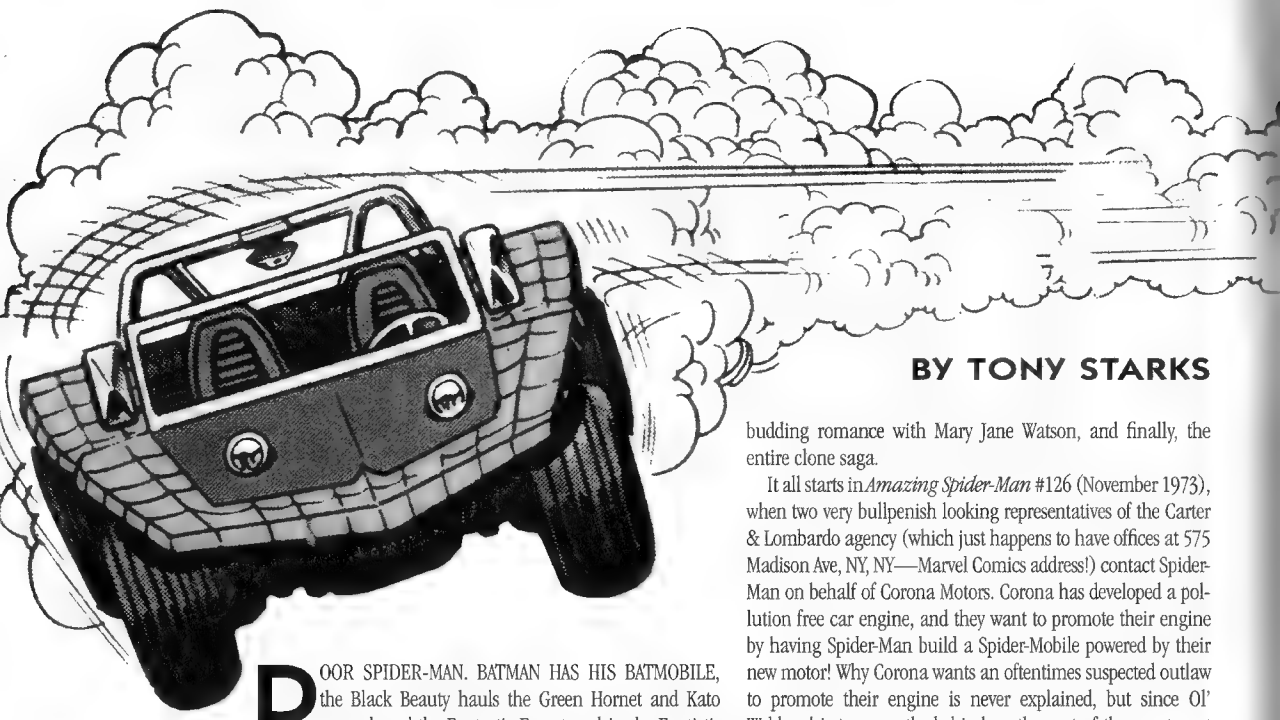
Whiz #2 (#1)
PR $6500

Strange Tales
All 'West Penn'
105 VF+ $295
106 NM $295
111 NM $750
113 VF+ $150
116 NM- $225
118 NM- $165
126 NM- $150

Tales of Suspense
All 'West Penn'
40 NM $2700
42 NM- $600
43 NM- $600
44 NM- $475
46 NM- $375
47 NM- $350
49 VF+ $275
50 NM $375
51 NM- $225
53 NM- $295
54 VF+ $115
55 NM- $225
56 NM $225
57 NM- $325
59 VF+ $495
63 NM- $295
68 NM $150
77 VF+ $60
78 NM $100
80 NM- $120
81 VF+ $60
83 NM- $75

VIA is always buying

entire collections or individual books printed before 1972.



The Fabulous... Spider-Mobile!

BY TONY STARKS

POOR SPIDER-MAN. BATMAN HAS HIS BATMOBILE, the Black Beauty hauls the Green Hornet and Kato around, and the Fantastic Four travel in the Fantasti-Car. Yet Spider-Man, arguably Marvel Comics most famous character, must walk, websling or bum a ride to wherever the bad guys are.

But it has not always been like this. There was a brief moment in Spidey's illustrious career when he arrived at the scene of the crime in a style that befits a founding member of the Marvel universe. Yes, Spider-Man had a car. The Spider-Mobile is a goofy, almost forgotten part of the Webslinger's past. Making only occasional appearances over a three year period, the Spider-Mobile was overshadowed by numerous and more significant events. These events include the deaths of Gwen Stacy and then the original Green Goblin, the introductions of the Punisher, the Jackal and the new Green Goblin, a budding romance with Mary Jane Watson, and finally, the entire clone saga.

It all starts in *Amazing Spider-Man* #126 (November 1973), when two very bullpenish looking representatives of the Carter & Lombardo agency (which just happens to have offices at 575 Madison Ave, NY, NY—Marvel Comics address!) contact Spider-Man on behalf of Corona Motors. Corona has developed a pollution free car engine, and they want to promote their engine by having Spider-Man build a Spider-Mobile powered by their new motor! Why Corona wants an oftentimes suspected outlaw to promote their engine is never explained, but since Ol' Webhead is two months behind on the rent of the apartment that he and Harry Osborn share, he eventually agrees.

Spider-Man turns to the Marvel universe's premiere hot rodder, the Human Torch, for help building the Spider-Mobile, and they start to work in *Amazing Spider-Man* #127 (December 1973). No team-up of Spidey and the Torch would be complete without an abundance of barbs and insults exchanged between the two, and the creative team of writer Gerry Conway and artist Ross Andru does not disappoint.

The Spider-Mobile makes its nearly forgotten debut in *Amazing Spider-Man* #130 (March 1974). Basically a dune buggy with a Spidery paint job and wheels, the Spider-Mobile does pack a few surprises. Gimmicks include built in Web-shooters, a Spider Signal, and ejector seat. But the niftiest trick has to be the Spider-Mobile's camouflage mode: with the flip of a switch, it turns into your average, nondescript sedan. As Peter Parker remarks when heading home: "Since I don't have a cave or anything to hide this junk-pile in . . ." We also learn that Spider-Man does not know how to drive! Says Spidey to the Torch: "I never thought

IT'S NO GAME PUNKO--IT'S THE SPIDER-MOBILE! from the debut of Spidey's car in Amazing Spider-Man #130 (Mar 1974).

HOLD IT! WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?
SOME SORT OF LIGHT PLAYING OVER THE BUILDING FRONT--WITH THE FACE OF SPIDER-MAN?
IS THIS SOME SORTA GAME?
NO GAME, PUNK'O--
IT'S THE SPIDER-MOBILE!
WHEEEEEOW!
KAARROOOOM!
BEFORE THE FOUR MARAUDERS CAN RECOVER THEIR WITS, THE BIZARRE BUGGY IS AMONG THEM--RUBBER SQUEALING, ENGINE SNARLING--
--AND BEHIND THE WHEEL, THE LAUGHING FORM OF SPIDER-MAN!
--WEB-SHOOTING FROM WEB-SHOOTERS--
THUD!
HEY, GANG--NO FAIR. I COME ALL THE WAY DOWN HERE ON A TIP, AND YOU GUYS DON'T EVEN PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE IT'S UP TO ME TO MAKE IT INTERESTING--AND SEEING AS HOW ONE OF YOU FELLAS IS ALREADY OFF AND RUNNING, I CAN--
TINGLE!
MY SPIDER-SENSE... WARNING ME THERE'S DANGER! BUT WHERE... HOW...
OH NO! NOT YOU! NOT--

FIRE VS. ICE! THE SON OF SATAN VS. THE EERIE ICE-DEMONS— TODAY!

I'd have the cash to buy a car. Besides . . . who needs to drive in Manhattan?"

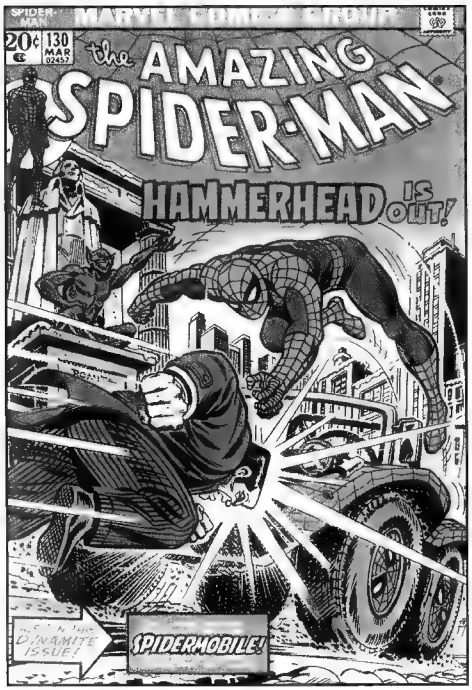
But with a few quick pointers from the Torch, Spider-Man is soon on the road. The Spider-Mobile proves itself competent enough by webbing up a few garden variety bad guys, but is not at all helpful against Hammerhead, the heavy hitter in this issue.

So... who needs to drive in Manhattan? Obviously not Spider-Man, as his shiny new wheels go virtually unmentioned for the next ten issues. When the fabulous Spider-Mobile finally reappears in *Amazing Spider-Man* #141 (February 1975), it is promptly driven off a pier into the Hudson river, courtesy of one of Mysterio's illusions. At least long suffering fans of the Spider-Mobile are treated to a Spider-Mobile pin up page. The following issue, *Amazing Spider-Man* #142 (March 1975), the Spider-Mobile makes a brief, bottom of the Hudson bay cameo appearance and then is not mentioned again for over a year.

The beginning of the end of the Spider-Mobile kicks off in *Amazing Spider-Man* #157 (June 1976). Tired of Spider-Man never driving the car they paid him to promote, Corona Motors threatens to sue. So Spidey takes a dip in the Hudson river, but (the plot thickens) all he finds is the side view mirror.

Where is the Spider-Mobile? Who would steal it—and why? The answers to these questions and more are presented in... *Amazing Spider-Man* #160 (September 1976), which brings the Spider-Mobile saga to a rollicking close. In a tale appropriately entitled "My Killer, the Car!" the Spider-Mobile reappears, and spends most of the story's 17 pages trying to squish its former owner like a, pardon the pun, bug.

MY ASSOCIATE AND I ARE IN THE ADVERTISING BUSINESS.
WE'VE JUST TAKEN ON A RATHER IMPORTANT CLIENT...
CORONA MOTORS.
CARTER & LOMBARDO AGENCY
575 MADISON
NEW YORK, N



MARVEL COMICS GROUP
30¢ 160 SEP
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! ALL MY SUPER-POWERS HAVE FAILED ME!
EXACTLY AS I PLANNED, FOOL! IN MOMENTS, YOU WILL BE DEAD!!!
AND NOW WITH SPIDER-MOBILE WILL BE YOUR MURDERER!

Amazing Spider-Man #130 (Mar 1974; below) introduced eager fans to the Spider-Mobile. Amazing Spider-Man #160 (Sep 1976; below right) saw the last appearance of Spidey's car.

The cover to this issue reveals the villain behind the suddenly homicidal Spider-Mobile, but only long time readers will recognize the profile of the Terrible Tinkerer. The Tinkerer, who is making only his second appearance (first in *Amazing Spider-Man* #2—May 1963) turns out not to be an alien. As good with gadgets as his name implies, the Tinkerer has modified the Spider-Mobile so that it can climb walls and emit a mist that nullifies Spider-Man's powers.

Ultimately, Spidey prevails, and he returns the battered Spider-Mobile to the 14th floor offices of the Carter and Lombardo advertising agency.

"And good riddance!" remarks Spider-Man, as he webslings across the New York skyline. And while most fans would probably agree, a few of us miss the time when Spider-Man had a car.

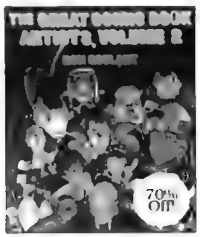
Over the years we've increased the variety of stock we handle. We now carry graphic novels, art books, prints, videos, etc.—over 4,000 items. But we haven't forgotten what started the whole business: collecting and selling comic books. We carry an extensive inventory of items that will appeal to **Silver Age and Golden Age** enthusiasts: comic strip collections, reference books on comic book history and collecting, collector supplies, special collector "finds," and much more. Check out some of the items below:

Photo-Journal Guide to Comic Books Vol 1-4 (Vol 1 2 **almost 40% off!**) • **Comics, Comix and Graphic Novels** by Roger Sabin • **The Comic Strip Century** by Bill Blackbeard, Ed. (was $79.95, now only $45.00) • All of **DC's Archive** series • **Marvel Masterworks** (many out-of-print volumes) • Comic Art Auction Catalogs from Christie's & Sotheby's • Special finds, such as mint copies of fanzines like **Witzend** and **Squa Tront** • Signed books by **Bob Kane, Jack Kirby, Joe Simon, Joe Kubert, Michael Kaluta** and many others (most exclusive to us!) • Comic strip collections: **Li'l Abner, Dick Tracy, Popeye**, etc. (many on sale) • and much, much more!

So check out our latest **248-page Bud Plant's Incredible Catalog**; it's only $3, which is redeemable on your first order. → You can call us toll-free and charge it, or we can be reached by mail, fax or e-mail. **NEW**: Order select items on our Website: www.budplant.com.

SELECTED BUD PLANT STOCK NOW AVAILABLE AT WHOLESALE FOR

COMIC BOOK RETAILERS, BOOKSELLERS & DEALERS!



We have a 24-page illustrated catalog of about 400 items available at wholesale prices, from 40% to 85% off cover price. Most of these are "remainder" or sale books.

We can deal only with bona-fide dealers with resale numbers; collectors should not apply.

Wholesale items, mostly at 75% to 85% off cover price, include:

Ray Bradbury Chronicles *signed/limited editions*
Vaughn Bodé's Poemtoons
Lone Wolf & Cub *graphic novels*
Heavy Metal *graphic novels*
Painted Ladies Cards
Earl MacPherson *signed prints*
Visions of Arzach
Tundra Sketchbooks
Clive Barker's Shadows in Eden
Prince Valiant
Cobalt 60
Elric *two graphic novels*
Gil Elvgren & ***J.C. Leyendecker Poster Books***

Included in the latest Wholesale Catalog are titles from Fantagraphics, Kitchen Sink, NBM, signed & numbered prints from Stabur, etc., adult graphic novels from Catalan, as well as the entire back-stock of Richard Corben's Fantagor Press.

For your free copy, please contact Todd Wulf

CATALOG #5 NOW AVAILABLE!
SPECIAL BUCK-A-BOOK CLEARANCE SALE!
OVER 150 TITLES AT 50¢-$1.50!

BUD PLANT COMIC ART

P.O. Box 1689-CM2A
Grass Valley, CA 95945

(800) 242-6642 M-F 9am-5pm PST
24hr Fax: (916) 273-0915

e-mail: cs@budplant.com
website: www.budplant.com

CM2A

SPIDER VILLAINS!

BY JASON VERSAGGI

A SALUTE TO THE CLASSIC STAN LEE/STEVE DITKO CREATED BAD GUYS THAT DEBUTED IN AMAZING SPIDER-MAN NOS. 1-38!

Over the years many have asked, "What elements of the Spider-Man mythos have made the wonderful webslinger one of the most influential and important characters ever to emerge from the Silver Age of comics?" Of the many possible answers, I think the most overlooked is his colorful court of cavorting cads! Spidey's rogues gallery, created by the brilliant team of Stan Lee and Steve Ditko, is easily comparable to Batman's. But growing up with such a strong devotion to the avenging arachnid, I have my bias as to who had the better cast of villains.

Every collector has a special penchant for a particular character, artist, writer or genre. Mine was *The Amazing Spider-Man*. And for me, the quintessential issues were the Steve Ditko gems, which encompassed the first 38 issues as well as Spider-Man's first appearance in *Amazing Fantasy* #15 (August 1962) and *Amazing Spider-Man Annual* #1 (1964). The classic Lee scripts were great enough, but the use of Ditko's subtle yet powerful artwork is probably the greatest marriage of artist and character in the history of comicdom!

Lee had the ability to create a character so true to life, and so believable that they could easily have existed... and Ditko had the power to make Peter Parker appear mild, and timid while Spider-Man leapt off the pages as a brash and bold costumed hero. Somehow Ditko's art simultaneously communicated youthful exuberance and the apprehension of inexperience... all while Spider-Man was swinging through the dark vagaries of Ditko's city.

Yet these elements were not the sole ingredients of greatness. Without a cadre of "great" bad guys, it would have all been for naught!

The often overlooked ingredient to Spidey's early and nearly instant success was those wonderful villains. As Ben Kenobi once told Luke regarding the Mos Eisley spaceport, "You will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy." So too can be described the pages of the early *Amazing Spider-Man* issues. The books color and flavor was built on its strong supporting cast, often led by the scoundrels not the hero. Among the ranks of serious collectors, it's the Spider-Man issues with villainous milestones that have become some of the hottest commodities over the past decade, and this trend doesn't seem

likely to change in the near future. And imagine what will happen when we are witness to these characters leaping from the Silver Age to the silver screen!

Unlike DC, a large percentage of Marvel Silver Age key issues are not first appearances of heroes. Since Marvel really only "revived" three of its Golden Age superstars for the Silver Age and created several more, the hobby has come to view an inordinate percentage of the first appearances of many Marvel villains as important key issues! And among the most sought after and famous are those villains that played prominent roles equal to Spider-Man in the overall webslinger mythology.

For me, no other Silver Age Marvel title is so chock full of "key" issues and first appearances than *Amazing Spider-Man* #1-38! All in all there were 16 bad guys (count 'em–16) who debuted during the Steve Ditko years. Of those, a solid dozen would go on to become major villains who menaced Spider-Man for many years thereafter and are still going strong. One villain, Mendel Stromm (from *Amazing Spider-Man* #37) would emerge decades later as the evil Gaunt, who recently terrorized Spider-Man during the clone saga.

Some of Spidey's villains were even used to establish early credibility for new heroes and generate sales on fledgling titles such as *Daredevil*, who for his first encounter with a villain, fought Electro in *Daredevil* #2 (June 1964).

Spider-Man was even more distinctive in that one of the first supervillain teams of the Silver Age (and, I think, also the coolest) was born of his arch-foes, the Sinister Six, and first appeared in *Amazing Spider-Man Annual* #1 (1964). One of the best annuals of all time, it had a great story, uniqueness in presentation, beautiful art, a sensational cast, and one of the ultimate villain-laden centerfolds in Silver Age history! (That classic showcased Spider-Man battling the Sinister Six, comprised of Dr. Octopus, Electro, Sandman, Mysterio, The Vulture, and Kraven.)

These villains and their settings reached truly mythical proportions. They were larger than life, yet as believable a concept as the protagonist they fought. Peter Sanderson, in his book *Marvel Universe*, wrote "Lee and Ditko transplant a motif from medieval fantasy into a contemporary urban world." This is the ultimate description of Spider-Man's surroundings. He was as normal a teenager as you would ever meet during his era, yet he was thrown into adventures in which we readers can only dream of. His adversaries were those of the great works of fiction, more fantastic in their nature and origins than any of the villains who came before them.

These characters symbolized the new company that was Marvel Comics. These are the villains that cut their teeth in the business of world conquest in the pages of *Amazing Spider-Man*.

The venerable house of ideas is responsible for countless memorable characters, and the Spidey villains rank high on this list. A noticeable trend in several of the Spider-Man villains origins is the presence of nature, especially the animal theme. Comics have long employed the natural abilities endowed within nature's creatures as the basis for a character's power and ability. Stan Lee and Steve Ditko turned this trick to perfection, especially the first three of Spider-Man's deadliest enemies....

Possibly Spider-Man's second greatest villain (next to the Green Goblin), **Dr. Octopus** first appeared in *Amazing Spider-Man* #3 (July 1963) and like many a villain of his day, was a scientist gone mad. The radiation-augmented explosion, which fused the tentacled bodice to the body of Otto Octavius, also warped his mind and gave him his appetite for power. Hell bent on becoming the supreme human being (and squashing a spider along the way) he became the first opponent to notch a victory over the wall crawler. This comic also sported one the truly classic Ditko covers, featuring Spider-Man helpless, at the mercy of the shadow enveloped Octopus.

He may have appeared to be your average octogenarian with wings, but the **Vulture** was, in fact, a slyly mechanical maniac whose greed led him to perform more daring heists. The Vulture first made his comic book debut in *Amazing Spider-Man* #2 (June 1963) and proved to be a worthy nemesis for Spider-Man, allowing Ditko to create classic battles amid the skyscrapers, flourished with aerial fight sequences and webslinging action. Aside from the Green Goblin, the The Vulture was only Ditko Spider-Man villain who could fly.

Amazing Spider-Man #2 also saw the appearance of the **Terrible Tinkerer**, in a back up story. A mischievous character who bore a striking resemblance to the Vulture, the Tinkerer was a easy victory for Spider-Man, and a bonus feature to the Vulture's first appearance.

While Dr. Curt Connors, the amicable one-armed scientist, was a nice guy and would develop into a long time friend to Peter Parker and Spider-Man, his alter ego the **Lizard** was the exact opposite. Spider-Man got to experience just how deadly the Lizard truly was in *Amazing Spider-Man* #6 (October 1963). My all time favorite Spider-Man villain, the Lizard reminds many collectors of a Jekyll & Hyde struggle... in this case Dr. Curt Connor's well-intentioned side only seemed to beget his evil, slithering reptilian side. Issue #6 is truly unique: Besides marking the Lizard's

ALL CHARACTERS, LOGOS, COVERS, & TITLES © 1997 MEG

ENTER ELECTRO the Lee/Ditko villain "based on electricity" and the Green Goblin in one of his most memorable poses.

THE LIZARD SLITHERS into Spider-Man's world in ASM #6 (Nov 1963).

ULTIMATE VILLAIN KEY... the 1st appearance of the infamous Green Goblin in ASM #14 (Jul 1964).

debut, it was the only time the character would menace Spider-Man during the Ditko reign. The Lizard would not return again until issue #44 and #45.

The aforementioned three villains all derived their names from animals, while **Kraven the Hunter** hunted Spider-Man as though he were stalking an animal. In fact Kraven, who first appeared in *Amazing Spider-Man* #15 (August 1964), felt that he had accomplished everything there was to accomplish as a hunter except for the challenge of bagging a real live human.

Enter the **Chameleon**, who is revealed to have a mysterious link to Kraven in this issue. The Chameleon was the first supervillain Spider-Man ever faced in issue #1 of *Amazing Spider-Man*. His debut was overshadowed by the fact that this was the first issue of the series, but he remained a major player in the life of Spider-Man nonetheless. The issue in which he enlisted Sergei Kravenoff to extinguish Spider-Man from his life is also the first cover appearance of the Chameleon, a bonus to the already desirable first Kraven aspect of #15. Kraven would appear again on a wonderful Ditko cover, #34, and remain a mysterious and slightly deranged character. He proceeds to lead Spider-Man on one of his most traumatic adventures, Kraven's last hunt, at the climax of which, Kraven commits suicide right in front of the wall crawler.

Arch enemy status is clearly reserved for one emerald prankster—the **Green Goblin**. Spider-Man and Peter Parker's worst nightmare first tossed pumpkin bombs in the highly collectible *Amazing Spider-Man* #14 (July 1964) and became the "Joker" in the life of Spider-Man. No other villain was more present during the Ditko era than the Goblin, making five cover and story appearances. The Green Goblin would later be revealed to be the father of one of Peter Parker's best friends, Harry Osborn. As Norman Osborn ran his business with cold calculating decisions, so was he equally cold and cruel when it came to his attempts to exterminate Spider-Man. In terms of significance to any Silver Age Marvel collector, *Amazing Spider-Man* #14 has to rank second only to *Fantastic Four* #5, the first Doctor Doom, on the roster of

ASM 1ST APPEARANCES

Lee/Ditko Spider-Villains

#1 (3/63) Chameleon
#2 (5/63) Vulture, & Terrible Tinkerer
#3 (7/63) Doc Octopus
#4 (9/63) Sandman
#6 (11/63) Lizard
#9 (2/64) Electro
#10 (3/64) Big Man & Enforcers
#13 (6/64) Mysterio
#14 (7/64) Green Goblin
#15 (8/64) Kraven the Hunter
#20 (1/65) Scorpion
#21 (2/65) 2nd Beetle (see Strange Tales #123)
#22 (3/65) Princess Python
#28 (9/65) Molten Man
#36 (5/66) Looter

important villain debuts. In Marvel, there is no greater hero than Spider-Man. He is the flagship character and it is only fitting that the debut of his major adversary should carry key issue status among collectors.

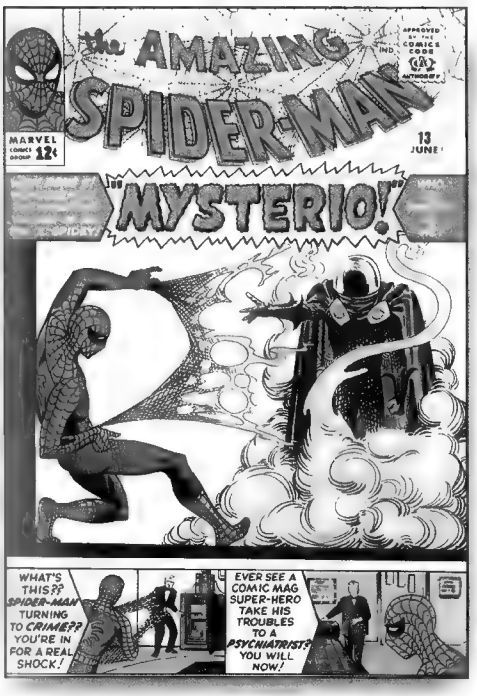
Other key baddies who were created by Lee and Ditko include: **Sandman**, who made his first appearance in *Amazing Spider-Man* #4 (August 1963) and would later join the Frightful Four and menace the Fantastic Four; **Electro**, whose origin and first appearance highlighted *Amazing Spider-Man* #9 (January 1964) shocked Spider-Man as one of Ditko and Lee's more ingenious creations, using the power of electricity for a villain; and the glass domed **Mysterio**, a movie special effects master, first confounded Spider-Man in issue #13 (May 1964)... and was the most elaborate costumed villain Spider-Man would face under the pen of Steve Ditko. The cover to *Amazing Spider-Man* #13 perfectly defines the action and importance of the Spidey villain to the overall book as Mysterio appears in a fantastic cloud of smoke which moves out like tendrils to entangle Spider-Man.

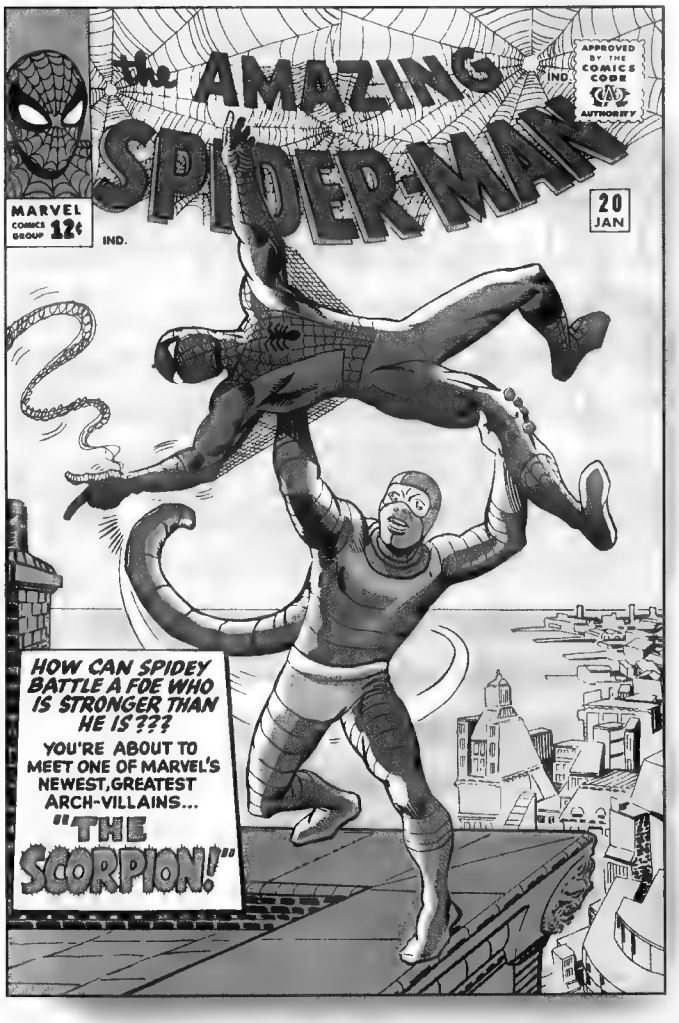
Like Spider-man, the last animal related villain was patterned after another arthropod! The **Scorpion**, who debuted in issue #20 (December 1964) fought Spider-Man in his search for revenge against the man who originally gave him life... the irascible J. Jonah Jameson.

And there were others great characters on the Spidey villain roster that deserve mention too, including Big Man & the Enforcers, The Beetle, Princess Python, Molten Man, The Looter... that carved out their rightful place in the Lee/Ditko era. Their collectible appearances have proven they are timeless and they exhibit qualities that make them perfect villains, yet the reader can feel for them as sometimes even Spider-Man does.

Keep your eye on these appearances, as it should not be long before the Spider-Man movie will be upon us and with the movie magic of today, these characters will likely be depicted in as menacing a way as they ever were originally drawn by Ditko. A fan once wrote "along came Lee and Ditko's spider... then along came their wonderful villains." And he was right... these memorable characters will live in the hearts of Silver Age Marvel fans... and the annals of comic book history... forever. Take it from one true believer to another... *Amazing Spider-Man* #1-38 spun a web that still ensnares the imaginations of readers to this very day!

TWO HIGHLY COLLECTIBLE VILLAIN PREMIERS: Amazing Spider-Man #13 (Jun 1964) introducing Mysterio and #20 (Jan 1965) with the debut of the Scorpion.


the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
IND.
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
13 JUNE
"MYSTERIO!"
WHAT'S THIS?? SPIDER-MAN TURNING TO CRIME?? YOU'RE IN FOR A REAL SHOCK!
EVER SEE A COMIC MAG SUPER-HERO TAKE HIS TROUBLES TO A PSYCHIATRIST? YOU WILL NOW!


the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
IND.
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
IND.
20 JAN
HOW CAN SPIDEY BATTLE A FOE WHO IS STRONGER THAN HE IS???
YOU'RE ABOUT TO MEET ONE OF MARVEL'S NEWEST, GREATEST ARCH-VILLAINS...
"THE SCORPION!"

On the cover, Adolf Hitler was in a great deal of trouble. A red-white-and-blue clad figure with a triangular shield that bore the Stars and Stripes had broken into his sanctum sanctorum. He had smashed through bars of solid steel to get at the Fuehrer himself. Three Nazi guards with machine guns blazed away at the interloper, but their bullets ricocheted off his shield like rubber bands. Even though a video screen in the room showed an image of an American munitions plant being blown to bits by saboteurs, the lone warrior had found Hitler in Germany, and was planting a haymaker on his chin with incredible force. It was the cover of *Captain American Comics* #1!

BY LOU MOUGIN

THE GOLDEN AGE OF CAPTAIN AMERICA!

That premiere issue began the career of comics' most successful patriotic superhero—a character who, in time, to many readers, would be the very symbol of American might and virtue. His reign has not been uninterrupted, but, for the best part of 55 years, Captain America has ruled as one of the most iconic figures in herodom.

And it all began with that one 1941 Timely comic book.

Timely Comics, as Marvel was known back then, had put creators Joe Simon and Jack Kirby to their best use. The two young men, Jewish in ancestry (as were publisher Martin Goodman and Goodman's kin-by-marriage, Stan Lee), had a chance to strike a symbolic blow at Adolf Hitler, who was killing Jews by the millions in European death camps… and they made the most of it. America might not have joined the war yet, but comics heroes (including industry leader Superman) had already been fighting Axis aggressors for months. Sometimes they had to fake up national names, sending the good guys against Napkan or Prussland. It mattered little. They knew who the bad guys were, and so did we!

Martin Goodman had little qualm with sending the Human Torch, the Sub-Mariner, and a host of other Timely mystery men against the Nazis. His only qualm with Captain America, reportedly, was that Hitler might be dead in the real world before Cap could throw that all-important first punch.

He should have been so lucky.

At any rate, Timely had only two real hits under their belt by early 1941, the aforementioned Torch and Sub-Mariner. They needed a third. A host of experimental heroes in *Daring Mystery Comics* had failed to work out. Goodman liked the Angel, but he was never strong enough to carry his own book. It was time to try something new—a flag-wrapped character whose costume and name would catch the eye of every red-blooded kid in America with a dime to spend on a comic!

Patriotic superheroes had already appeared in other companies' comics, and were doing quite well. The Shield, who debuted in MLJ's *Pep Comics* #1 (January 1940), and Uncle Sam, who started in Quality's *National Comics* #1 (July 1940), preceded Cap by a year or more. Even Fawcett's Minute Man

may have scooped him by a month (*Master Comics* #11, February 1941). Thus, Captain America can't truthfully be called the "original" patriotic character in comics... but he can be called the best... especially with Simon and Kirby as progenitors!

Enter Simon & Kirby!

In the days before his draft notice came through, Joe Simon was Timely's editor. He and Jack Kirby had been working there for about a year. Their first joint project at the company was the one-shot *Red Raven Comics* in 1940. Goodman then asked Simon to create his three-colored superstar. Joe responded with a sketch of a hero in basic blue, with red and white stripes circling his middle (from issue #2 on, they only went around his front) and a head mask. The hero's boots and gloves were red, and he hefted the triangular, badge-shaped shield with white stars on a blue background at the top and red and white stripes filling the rest of its surface.

White wings were added to his mask. Jack Kirby later claimed this was a nod to Mercury, the Greek god of speed, whom Jack had featured in a comic book story in *Red Raven* #1. But to me, and to many others, the wings suggested another patriotic symbol—the American eagle. (The eagle's wings might not be white, but it's the thought that counts.)

Goodman's name for the character had been Super American. Joe changed the name, slightly. "Super-American" wasn't bad—Fiction House had already used it for a character. But it was too close to "Super-Man" and DC's lawyers were already suing the pants off anybody who even got close to the character's name. Also, since they were going to make the hero a soldier in his civilian identity, a military rank might be best. Comic captains had been abounding ever since Captain Marvel had hit it big for Fawcett the previous year.

Captain America—it had just the right ring to it. So Timely let the talented S&K produce the first issue of *Captain America Comics*, with the incredible cover described above. Martin Goodman probably realized that whether Hitler was dead or alive in the real world didn't really matter... nobody would object to letting Cap have a sock at the free world's most hated man.

There was one more refinement: Bucky Barnes. He was Cap's version of Batman's Robin, clad in blue tunic and shorts, red leggings, boots, and gloves, and black eye mask, and he worked. Joe Simon figured that Cap needed somebody to talk to, or he would be stricken with the common comic hero affliction of talking to himself all the time. Thus, Bucky was instituted as Hero's Friend and a point of identification with the kids who would dream of being Cap's sidekick themselves. The kid would stay from Cap's first adventure through his last 1950's appearance, with an interruption we shall cover in a bit.

The Golden Age origin of Cap!

Now... how to justify the character's existence as a Nazi fighter when we weren't yet in World War II?

Not to worry. The first panel proper of the story showed a long line of American youth heading into an Army recruiting station, as a caption read: "As the ruthless war-mongers of Europe focus their eyes on a peace-loving America...the youth of our country heed the call to arm for defense...But great as the danger of foreign attack...is the threat of invasion from within...the dreaded Fifth Column..." This was punctuated by the sight of two saboteurs in Army uniform, standing in front of a building labeled "American Munitions Inc." One of them, holding the plunger of a dynamite triggering box, said, "It was easy joining the Army with the forged papers—now to carry out the Fuehrer's plans!"

An instant later, in a dramatic half page panel, the munitions plant blew up as the grinning spies looked on. If there was anything Kirby liked to draw better than a punch, it was an explosion.

The scene shifted to Washington, DC, where President Franklin D. Roosevelt was receiving reports from beleaguered military officials. "They're (the fifth columnists) so firmly entrenched in our ranks that I hesitate to give a confidential report even to my most trusted aide," fumed one general. "An army spotted with spies," chimed in another. "It's—it's useless!"

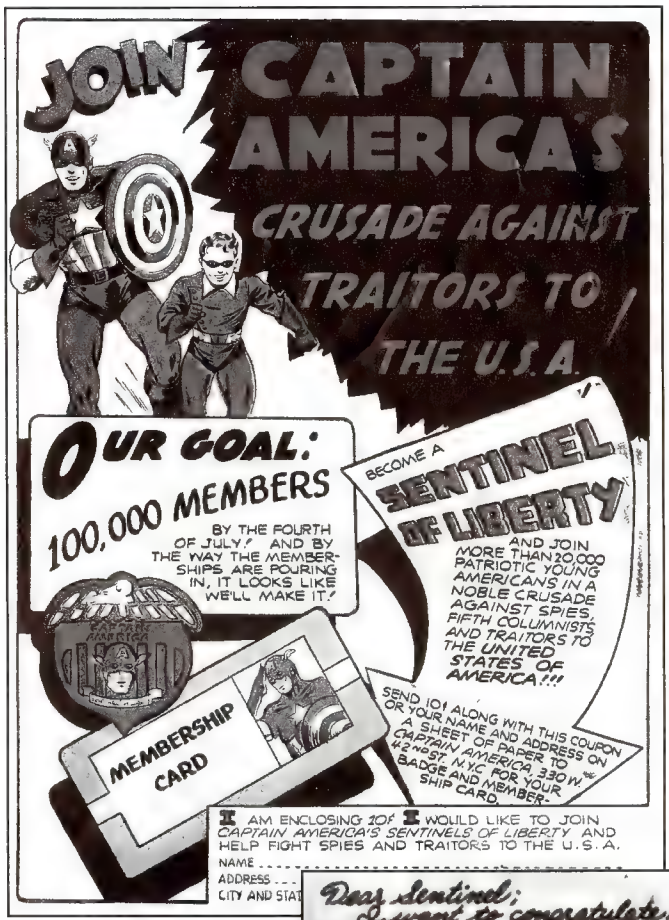
"What would you suggest, gentlemen?" queried FDR in a glasses-and-brow-shot. "A character out of the comic books? Perhaps the Human Torch in the Army would solve the problem!" But before we could contemplate the problem of drafting androids, the president admitted, "But seriously, gentlemen—something is being done! I neglected to tell you, because—well...I wasn't sure! But now—" He buzzed the front desk, and ushered in "J. Arthur Grover, head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who has a plan that may interest you!"

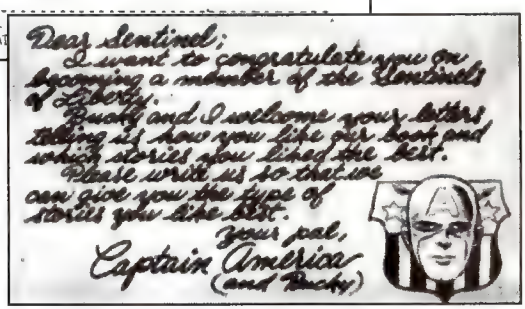
J. Arthur and the two

(Continued on page 60)

The original Captain America and Bucky before the introduction of his famous round shield.

In 1984, when I was becoming aware of something called a "Silver Age" and a "Golden Age" during which countless treasures had emerged, I attended the San Diego Comicon for about the fifth time. Prior to that, I'd seen older comics on the wall, but took little time to ponder their appeal or value. I realized, however, that some of the faces that I'd seen in previous years were coming back year after year. Among them was a guy by the name of Gary Coddington. For any who don't remember, Gary (who passed away about four years ago) was "The World's Greatest Superman Collector." I had come to expect interesting things when I visited his booth; but this particular year, I found something which stuck in my memory for years afterward. Inside a glass case he had numerous doodads and memorabilia which, to my memory, is all blended into a hazy mush. But the thing which stood out above all else was a little badge in the corner which had a familiar face on it. I asked Gary what it was and he said that it was "The Captain America Sentinels of Liberty Badge." I'd never heard of it but was interested all the same. It wasn't in particularly good condition, but something about it demanded my gaze. When he told me the price—($200, if memory serves), I gulped an "oh" and just figured I'd never be able to get one of those.


JOIN
CAPTAIN AMERICA'S
CRUSADE AGAINST TRAITORS TO THE U.S.A.
OUR GOAL:
100,000 MEMBERS
BY THE FOURTH OF JULY!' AND BY THE WAY THE MEMBERSHIPS ARE POURING IN, IT LOOKS LIKE WE'LL MAKE IT!
BECOME A
SENTINEL OF LIBERTY
AND JOIN MORE THAN 20,000 PATRIOTIC YOUNG AMERICANS IN A NOBLE CRUSADE AGAINST SPIES, FIFTH COLUMNISTS AND TRAITORS TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!!!
MEMBERSHIP CARD
SEND 10¢ ALONG WITH THIS COUPON OR YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ON A SHEET OF PAPER TO CAPTAIN AMERICA 330 W. 42nd ST. N.Y.C. FOR YOUR BADGE AND MEMBERSHIP CARD.
I AM ENCLOSING 10¢ I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN CAPTAIN AMERICA'S SENTINELS OF LIBERTY AND HELP FIGHT SPIES AND TRAITORS TO THE U.S.A.
NAME
ADDRESS
CITY AND STATE


Dear Sentinel;
I want to congratulate you on becoming a member of the Sentinels of Liberty.
Bucky and I welcome your letters telling us how you like our book and which stories you liked the best.
Please write us so that we can give you the type of stories you like best.
Your pal,
Captain America
(and Bucky)

"OUR GOAL: 100,000 Members by the Fourth of July" claims a later Sentinels of Liberty Advertisement (above). Only known copy of the Sentinels postcard (right).

COURTESY HARRY MATETSKY COLLECTION

Fast forward about eight years... *Comic Book Marketplace* #8 (with the Superman sirocco statue cover) had just come out, and mentioned the Captain America Sentinels of Liberty Badge in the John Snyder article. Upon further investigation in *Tumbusch's Radio & Comic Character Premium Guide*, I discovered that the badge was one of three items included in the Membership Kit. The other two were the membership card and the envelope (in which the badge and card arrived). Only the card was pictured which led me to the [now substantiated] conclusion that the envelope was a pretty difficult piece to get if it wasn't even pictured in this guide (which appeared to "have it all" at the time). Now, after six years of following every lead and searching under every rock, "difficult piece to get" is among the grander understatements I've ever made.

I've met a variety of people who know of or have seen the elusive badge; but few have ever even conceived of the notion that the badge came in anything but a plain envelope or had a nifty membership card to accompany it. Those with any degree of knowledge about the Sentinels mystery number around 10. Because of sparse documentation, the folks I hounded the most over the years were the ones who've provided me with the most information. While production of the badges and cards remains a mystery to this day, there are clues which lead to some interesting hypotheses.

The advertisement in *Captain America* #1 features an artist's (probably Simon and Kirby) prototype rendition of a badge which doesn't likely exist. Interestingly, the badge has head shots of Cap, Bucky, and Betty Ross (presumably to appeal to the projected female readership). As was the case with most all premiums of the time (WW II era), the badge wouldn't be created until a reasonable number of responses arrived at Timely Publications. Perhaps by the time *Captain America* #6 went to press, they had already *(Text continues on page 58)*

Sentinels OF Liberty!

Captain America's crusade against spies, fifth columnists, and traitors in the United States of America!

BY DAVID LYNN

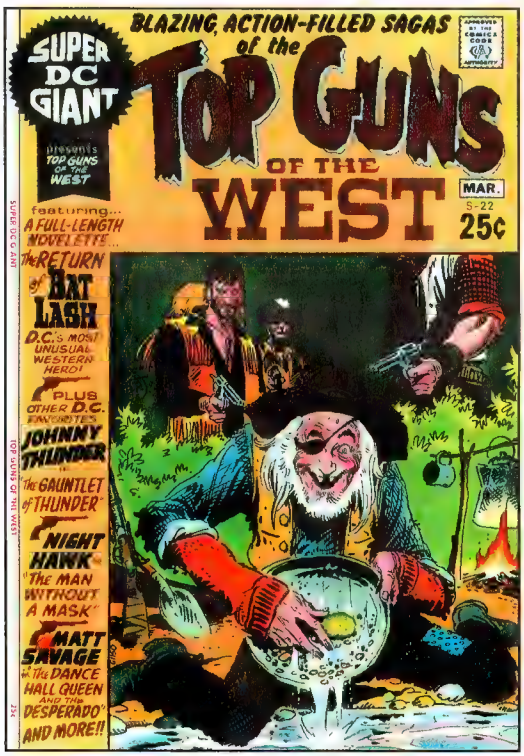
CAPTAIN AMERICA'S
SENTINELS OF LIBERTY
Pledge To Principles
1. IN GOD WE TRUST.
2. ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG AND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
3. TO MAKE MYSELF A BETTER CITIZEN AND DEFEND MY GOVERNMENT FOREVER
OFFICIAL MEMBERSHIP
CAPTAIN AMERICA'S
SENTINELS OF LIBERTY
I, THE UNDERSIGNED, SOLEMNLY PLEDGE TO UPHOLD THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SENTINELS OF LIBERTY, AND TO ASSIST CAPTAIN AMERICA IN HIS FIGHT UPON THE ENEMIES WHO ATTEMPT TREASON AGAINST THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
SIGNATURE
49228

CAPTAIN AMERICA'S
SENTINELS OF LIBERTY
Pledge To Principles
1. IN GOD WE TRUST
2. ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG AND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
3. TO MAKE MYSELF A BETTER CITIZEN AND DEFEND MY GOVERNMENT FOREVER.
OFFICIAL MEMBERSHIP
CAPTAIN AMERICA'S
SENTINELS OF LIBERTY
I, THE UNDERSIGNED, SOLEMNLY PLEDGE TO UPHOLD THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SENTINELS OF LIBERTY, AND TO ASSIST CAPTAIN AMERICA IN HIS FIGHT UPON THE ENEMIES WHO ATTEMPT TREASON AGAINST THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
SIGNATURE
52321

Top row (left to right): Brass Badge; Copper Badge; Reproduction Badge; back of Reproduction Badge (note crosshatched texture on the back and the lack of pupils on the front). At right (top to bottom): Type A card front; type A card back; type B card front; type B card back. Below: mailing envelope.

Super DC Giant #S-15 (Sep/Oct 1970)

Super DC Giant #S-17 (Sep/Oct 1970)


SUPER DC GIANT
BLAZING ACTION-FILLED SAGAS of the
TOP GUNS OF THE WEST
MAR.
S-22
25¢
featuring... A FULL-LENGTH NOVELETTE... the RETURN of BAT LASH
D.C.'s MOST UNUSUAL WESTERN HERO!
PLUS OTHER D.C. FAVORITES
JOHNNY THUNDER in "the GAUNTLET of THUNDER"
NIGHT HAWK "The MAN WITHOUT A MASK"
MATT SAVAGE in "The DANCE HALL QUEEN AND THE DESPERADO" AND MORE!!

Super DC Giant #S-22 (Feb/Mar 1971)

SUPER DC GIANT
DC THE UNEXPECTED
HAVE YOU THE NERVE TO FACE THE
UNEXPECTED
ONLY 25¢
APR.
NO. S-23
64 BIG PAGES
"THE GIRL IN THE IRON MASK"
"MYSTERY OF THE LITTLE BLACK BAG"
"THE FACE IN THE CLOCK" PLUS 4 MORE EERIE EXPERIENCES
NOW THAT HE'S ASLEEP, I'LL FIND OUT AT LAST WHY JOHN HAS REFUSED TO LET ANYBODY SEE WHAT'S BEHIND THOSE BANDAGES!
"THE MAN WHO WALKED LIKE A MUMMY!"

Super DC Giant #S-23 (Mar/Apr 1971)

Super DC Giant #S-21 (Jan/Feb 1971)

Super DC Giant #S-24 (May/Jun 1971)

SUPER DC GIANT
25¢ DO YOU DARE ENTER THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY
NOV.
NO. S-20
SECOND DEATH of ABE LINCOLN
THE LAUGHING GHOST
THE THING
PLUS GHOST SNOWMAN THE RED ROC! MAGIC for SALE! The THIEF OF THOUGHTS!
YOU KIDS QUIT THOSE CREEPY NOISES--
OR I'LL STOP READING YOU THESE GHOST STORIES!

Super DC Giant #S-20 (Oct/Nov 1970)

SUPER DC GIANT
PRESENTS challengers of the UNKNOWN
A COLOSSAL COLLECTION OF KIRBY CLASSICS
CHALLENGERS of the UNKNOWN
AUG.
25¢
Starring THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS VILLAINS
"THE MAN WHO STOLE THE FUTURE"
"CAPTIVES OF THE SPACE CIRCUS"
"The WIZARD of TIME"
PLUS "STRATEGY for SURVIVAL" and GIANT PIN-UP
ALL TITLES & LOGOS © 1997 DC

Super DC Giant #S-25 (Jun/Jul 1971)

Captain America #78 (Sep 1954)

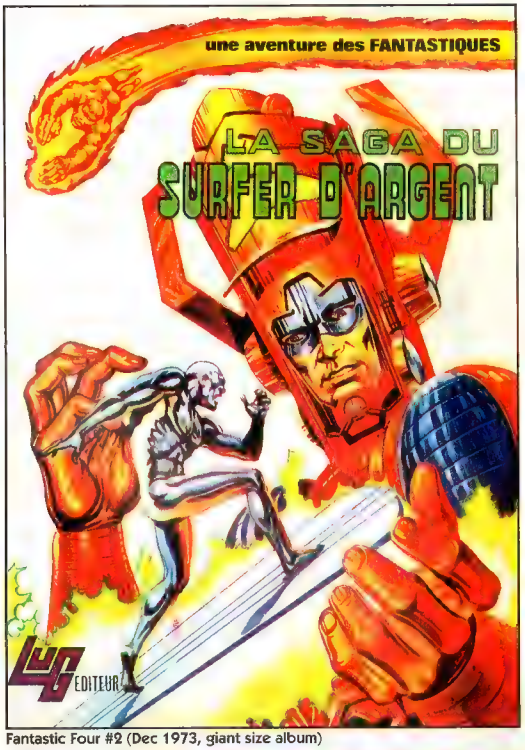
Captain America' Weird Tales #75 (Feb 1950)

HUMAN TORCH
STARRING IN
MEN'S Adventures
JULY
NO. 28
10¢
PUSH THAT PLUNGER YOU FOOL! THE ENTIRE COMMUNIST WORLD IS WAITING!
BUT, COMRADE LOOK!... IT'S THE HUMAN TORCH!
QUICK, TORO... USE YOUR FLAMING HANDCUFFS!
THEY'RE TRAPPED! NOW TO FIND THEIR LEADER BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
STARRING THE HUMAN TORCH THE MAN OF FLAME
ALSO IN THIS ISSUE... CAPTAIN AMERICA AND SUB-MARINER
CAPTAIN AMERICA, MEN'S ADVENTURES, HUMAN TORCH, SUB MARINER © 1997 MEG

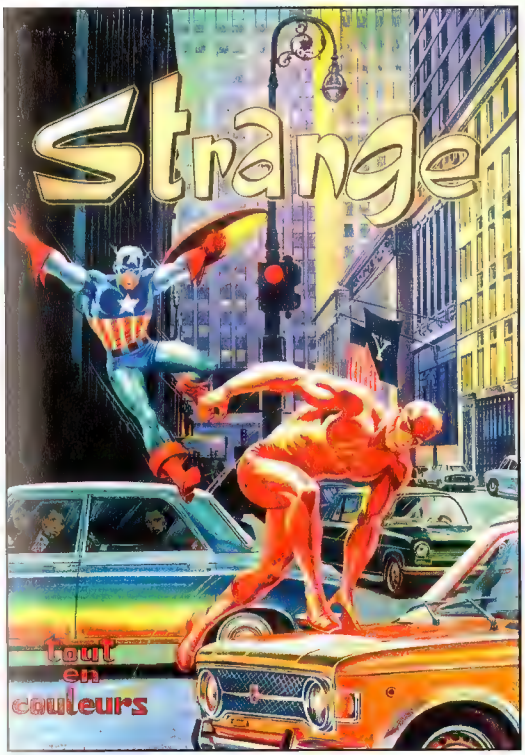
Men's Adventures #28 (Jul 1954)

Captain America #76 (May 1954)

Strange #34 (Oct 5th, 1972)



Fantastic Four #2 (Dec 1973, giant size album)



Strange #42 (Jun 5th, 1973)

Fantastic Four #3 (Mar 1974, giant size album)

CAPTAIN AMERICA, DAREDEVIL, FANTASTIC FOUR, PANTHER, SILVER SURFER & 1997 MVL

Captain Americana

BY RICHARD HOLLEY

1

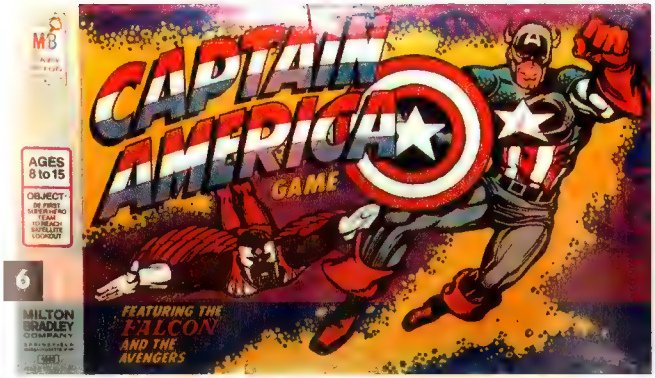
1. Marvel Comics Bubble Gum (Topps Chewing Gum, 1979, four in set) $25 per set

2

2. Marvel Avengers Patch (Captain America, Transcolor, 1984) $10; **3.** Captain America stand-up 6.5" display (Marvel, 1976) $20; **4.** Marvel Presents the Captain America Collector's Edition (hard cover, Marvel, 1981, reprints Steranko issues) $15; **5.** Captain America Official Utility Belt (Remco, 1979) $120.

4

5



6

6. Captain America Game (Milton Bradley, 1977) $30; **7.** Captain Action/Captain America (1966, w/ accessories) $750; **8.** Capt. America Americar (Larami, 1974?) $30; **9.** Captain America Coloring Book (Whitman, 1966) $25; **10.** Capt. Am. Sum. Spec. (British, 1979) $10.

7

8

9

11

11. Captain America tile puzzle (American Publ., 1978) $25; **12.** Marvel Superheroes Turbo Coupe (Toy Biz, 1990, smaller "rocket seat" fits inside larger coupe) $25; **13.** Captain America rocket car (Corgi, 1979) $100.

10

12

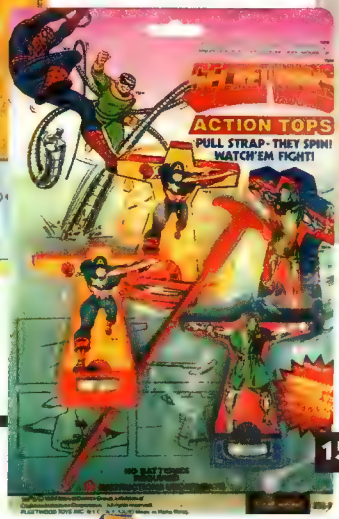
13

14

14. Captain America Cosmic Ray Light Gun (Larami, 1974) $40;
15. Secret Wars Action Tops (Fleetwood Toys, 1984) $20.

16. The Spirit of '76–inflatable pillow (Best Seal, 1975) $35.

16



15

18. Sky Heroes Captain America glider (Marx, 1977) $25.

18

17

17. Secret Wars Turbo-copter with Captain America (Mattel, 1984) $30.

19

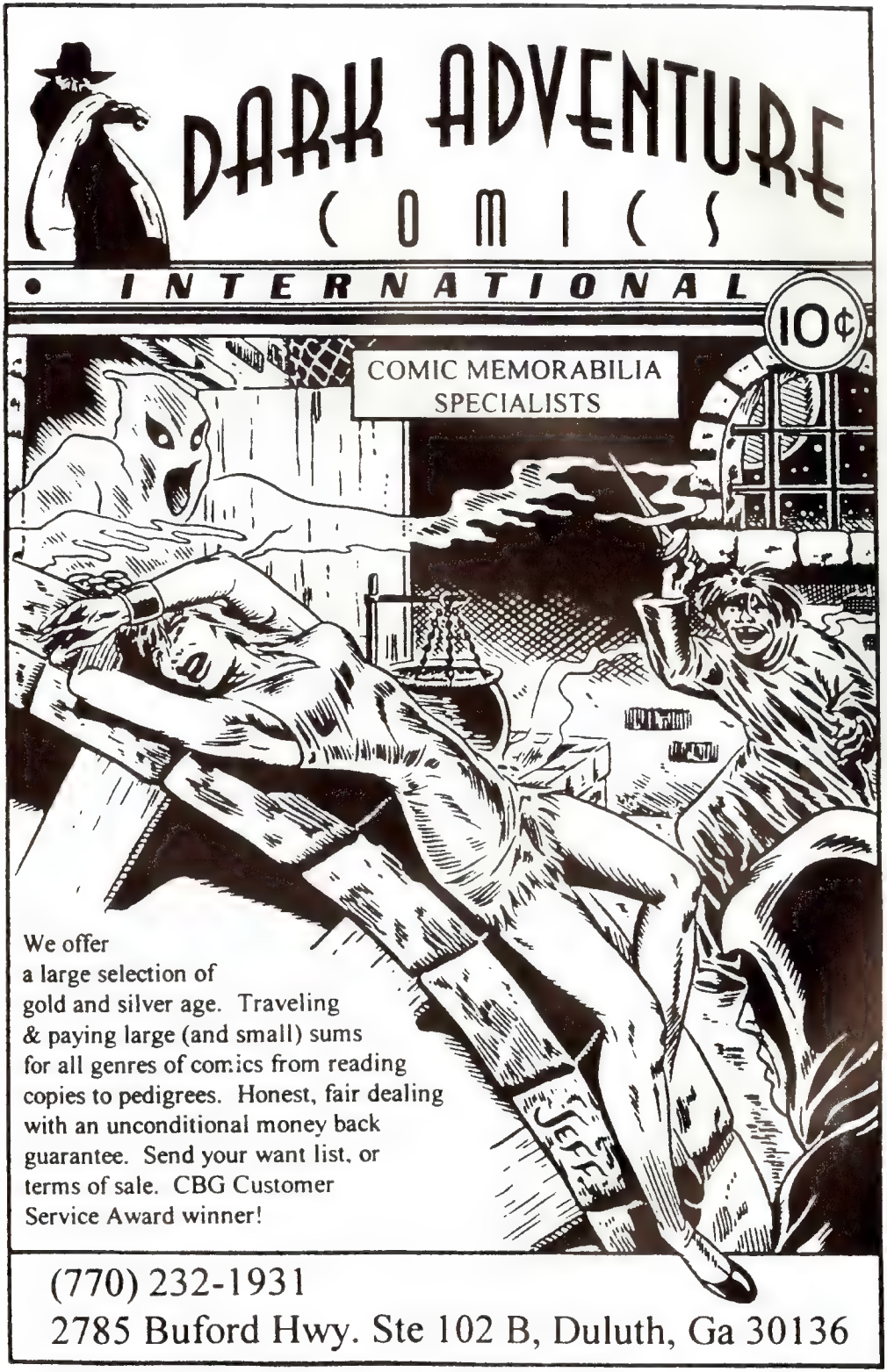
20

21

19. Capt. Am. large pinback (1980) $5;
20. Bubble Funnies (set of six, Amurol, 1981) $10 per comic;
21. Captain America Jigsaw puzzle (Whitman/Western, 1976) $25;
22. Captain America and the Falcon book and record set (Power Records, 1974) $20.

22

CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE FALCON, SPIDER-MAN, THE HULK, SECRET WARS & AVENGERS © 1997 MEG. ALL TOY, GAME & PUZZLE MANUFACTURER'S LOGOS & TRADEMARKS © THEIR INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES



(770) 232-1931
2785 Buford Hwy. Ste 102 B, Duluth, Ga 30136

FIGHT
GO
FI
C
A
G
O
M
BY ARNOLD T. BL

ING THE OD GHT

APTAIN MERICA, UARDIAN F MARVEL ORALITY

UMBERG

Design & Layout by Brenda Busick

From sea to shining sea, everyone knows of the "Living Legend" and his heroic exploits. But how did a simple soldier become an enduring symbol of courage, idealism, and morality? We offer a brief look at the star-spangled hero's spiritual journey, and a glimpse of where Cap will be heading in the years ahead.

Night in the city. Somewhere in the cavernous depths of Manhattan, three figures in black slip quietly down an alleyway. They are young, barely out of their teens, and their intentions are undeniably criminal. Suddenly, the bright gleam of metal shatters the darkness, and a spinning disc—red and white concentric stripes, a white star emblazoned in a blue center—careens off the nearby wall, sending two of the interlopers diving to the ground. Sparks fly as it rebounds off brick and concrete, rendering the fleeing third figure unconscious before he even hits the ground. As the disc bounces off the asphalt into a red-gauntleted hand, one of the hoods looks up with fearful eyes. He recognizes the proud shield and its owner, and he knows their plans have been foiled. A confident voice emerges from the shadows, calming and yet commanding at the same time. "Isn't this a school night, son?" he quips as he steps into the light, and his brightly colored red, white, and blue garb signals the triumph of order and justice. He is the Living Legend of World War II, the Sentinel of Liberty, the *real* American hero—he is Captain America.

BY THE DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT

Captain America was born in 1941 amid a storm of patriotic fervor and righteous indignation. The United States, finally forced to acknowledge the

world at war around them, had joined the fray determined to defeat the Axis powers. Characters throughout film, radio, and print were used to rally the American fighting spirit, and from that fictional crowd emerged a new hero—a soldier destined to become a legend in his own time.

Steve Rogers was an ordinary man who dreamed of serving his country. Too weak and scrawny to be a soldier, he was offered the chance to participate in a government project designed to create a new breed of "super-soldier." Emerging from that experiment with enhanced strength and stamina, and still possessing the same purity of spirit, Rogers became America's newest secret weapon: Captain America. Co-creator Joe Simon credits Cap as being the first human Marvel hero. "He wasn't a big gun-toter, but a common man, a soldier," Simon says. "He was a perfect hero."

Cap's early adventures were dominated by "Ratzi/Jap-bashing," as Cap and his sidekick, Bucky, laid into the soulless monsters who threatened democracy. It was a simpler time in many respects; a time when good and evil were clearly defined, and young Americans could innocently thrill to the exploits of their hero as he decimated the enemies of freedom around the globe. Against such foes as the deadly Red Skull, a Nazi agent who served as one of Hitler's weapons in the war against the Allies, Cap and Bucky were shining examples of American guts and determination—the Axis never had a chance, and we knew it.

The fiercely patriotic slant that colored most of Captain America's early stories continued when a '50's revival pitted Cap and Bucky against the "Commies." As before, some of the attitudes and posturing were politically incorrect by today's standards, but this was just another rallying cry for young Americans, enlisting their support in the war against foreign invasion both physical and ideological. Captain America took the fight to the enemy, and the country's sovereignty and stability were safe again.

Eventually, as the urgency of Nazi and Communist aggression receded, Captain America was left without a crusade, and his star faded into obscurity. In comic book terms, Cap was frozen in suspended animation at the close of World War II, and the 1950s-era Cap and Bucky would later be revealed as brainwashed impostors, but of course, that was mere editorial tap-dancing. The country had simply grown out of its need for a flag-waving hero, at least temporarily. Like the mythical King Arthur, Captain America slept, ready to awaken and take up his shield in the time of his country's greatest need. That time was quickly approaching.

WHAT SO PROUDLY WE HAILED

By the 1960s, the dawn of a new heroic age in comics had begun, and the time was right to reintroduce a legend. When Captain America was discovered in a block of ice by the Avengers and revived, he found himself in a world very different from the one he left; a world, not of black and white, but of shades of grey, where good and evil were not as clearly defined.

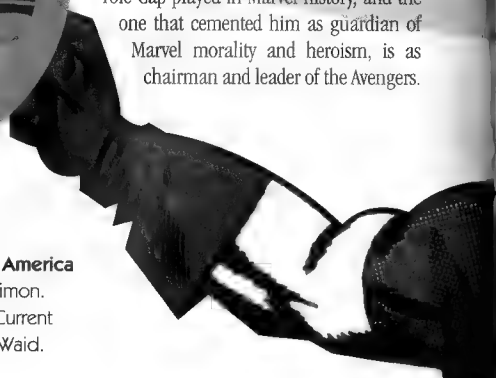
The Vietnam era was consumed by quite a different conflict than those plaguing the America of the '40s and '50s. With young and old locked in an ideological war of words, the United States was not a homogenous bastion of patriotism, spear-heading the cause of freedom and democracy in far off lands. Vietnam pitted generations of Americans against each other, and the war was waged on the home front as well as abroad. Into this new battle, Captain America walked alone, taken in by his Avengers compatriots and forced to adjust to an America that had forgotten the simpler values. His sidekick Bucky had been lost in World War II, laying down his life for his friend and his country, and that too was a loss that Cap had to bear. Despite these hurdles, Cap never swayed from his devotion to his native land, and within a few short years, Cap evolved from a war-time relic into the absolute moral center of the Marvel Universe.

Virtually every other hero looks up to Cap, not just as an ideal example of true heroism, but as a father figure. Perhaps because of Bucky's tragic death, Cap has often seemed not only like a man out of time, but a teacher without a student. To fill the void, other heroes have learned from his experience or tried to take up the challenge of being the Living Legend's partner. Temporary compatriots like Rick Jones, the Falcon, and Diamondback reinforced the idea that Cap was more than just another hero—he was a mentor and guide, with a wealth of knowledge and wisdom to impart. Even mavericks like Spider-Man have sought Cap's advice, which is always administered with the easy manner of a man who has seen it all and still believes. "What seems to be the problem, son?" he might ask Spidey. Although he can't be more than five years older than the webslinger, the father-son roles are clear and silently understood.

THROUGH THE PERILOUS FIGHT

Throughout the '70s and '80s, Captain America was regularly faced with tests of his faith and courage, but through it all, his purity of spirit and strength of will remained constant. In clashes with his arch-enemy, the Red Skull, who tried to defeat Cap with weapons like the Cosmic Cube or accelerated aging, our hero was steadfast and won the day. Even after his brief sojourns as Nomad and the Captain, periods in which he was either inspired or forced to abandon the mantle of Captain America, he always returned to that identity with an even greater sense of purpose.

Perhaps the most important stabilizing role Cap played in Marvel history, and the one that cemented him as guardian of Marvel morality and heroism, is as chairman and leader of the Avengers.



Above: **Captain America** co-creator Joe Simon. Opposite right: Current Cap writer Mark Waid.

Having joined the group after its initial creation, Cap was left by the founders (Iron Man, Thor, Ant-Man, and the Wasp) to run a team comprised of largely untried misfit heroes (Hawkeye, Quicksilver, and the Scarlet Witch). Clearly, his suitability as a team leader was already in evidence, and in short order, he swiftly established himself as arguably the most accomplished and tactically skilled combat leader in comics.

"When I saw him turn three of the most down-and-out rogues into Avengers...heroes who could meet any challenge...I knew Cap could achieve miracles," Quicksilver himself commented in the pivotal *Captain America* #444, written by current series scribe Mark Waid. "Cap was our tactician. There's always a way, and Cap could find it," Black Widow noted, and indeed, even when he wasn't holding the actual title in the Avengers lineup, Captain America has always been the de facto leader of the team whenever he is present—the man who symbolizes the Avengers spirit. All others defer to his judgment and tactical strategy. Even gods like Thor and Hercules, beings who supposedly possess millennia of combat experience, follow Cap's orders and would fight by his side to the ends of the universe. His voice has been described as powerful enough to command the gods. "On Olympus, we measure wisdom against Athena, speed against Hermes, power against Zeus," Hercules said. "But we measure courage against Captain America."

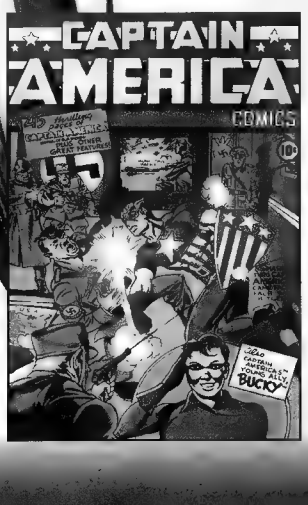
SO GALLANTLY STREAMING

"The ongoing struggle with writing *Captain America*," observes Waid, "is to make such a morally upright character relevant to a generation of kids who have to go through a metal detector to get into school. For young readers, I see Cap as a line of defense in an otherwise hostile world. He is very literally a shield." In his most recent adventures, Cap has been repeatedly defined through his actions as a man of duty and honor. Waid in particular has not only reaffirmed Cap's legendary status, but found new ways to reflect the ideals and values that lie at the heart of the American Dream. Although another famous hero lays claim to the notion, Captain America is the only real crusader for truth, justice, and the American way. "Superman by nature of his own humility cannot understand his importance in the world," Waid notes, "but Cap can't be that naive about it. He is something that Superman never was—he is a teacher. He's taken all these heroes under his wing over the years, and he can't help but realize the impact he has on his peers. In the next year, he's even going to be looking for a 'Vice-Cap' if you will, someone who will carry on the identity if necessary."

Captain America has certainly come a long way from the Ratzi-bashing soldier of WWII. As the country has changed with the times, maturing through conflicts that blurred the line between right and wrong, Cap has never wavered from his duty and beliefs. He may only be a creation of paper and ink, but this simple comic book character has become a powerful American icon embodying very real values. No matter what choices are made—whether Cap leads or follows, whether he works for his government or against it, whether he wears wings or the proud "A" on his cowl—Cap will always remain loyal to the ideals and morals we all cherish, symbolizing the American Dream of liberty and justice for all.

"I don't think Captain America is ever going to die," Simon says. "He's unblemished, pure of spirit. He represents the father figure, Jesus Christ among the superheroes." Waid agrees, "Now that he's popped back into reality again after *Heroes Reborn*, he's more of a legend than ever. He's a humble guy who believes that anyone with the suit and the serum could do the job, but to the world, he's like a god."

Captain America has overcome many obstacles in his never-ending battle against evil, and now he has returned from oblivion yet again to fight for his country and people. With the support of writers like Mark Waid and millions of dedicated fans, the Living Legend is ready to carry that fight past his 60th birthday and well into the next millennium. One thing is certain—for as long as comic book readers young and old thrill to his exploits, Captain America will serve as a shining example of the best in all of us, and the kind of human being we all aspire to become.



Arnold T. Blumberg is Managing Editor of Gemstone Publishing Maryland and is a well-known collector of comic books and science fiction memorabilia. Arnold has been published in previous issues of CBM *and* FAN.

THE MAN
FE
by Benn Ray and Arnold T. Blumberg

WITHOUT FEAR:

DAREDEVIL, A HERO FOR THE EVERYMAN

While the Fantastic Four and the Avengers are off in space battling some cosmic menace, and Spider-Man is caught in a mid-air tousle with the Green Goblin high over the streets of New York, only one hero makes it his business to stay on Earth, mired in the grit and grime of the city, and clean up the filth that lurks in Hell's Kitchen. His name is Matt Murdock, attorney-at-law (most of the time), but to the denizens of darkness that plague New York, he's known as the Man Without Fear—Daredevil. How did Matt become the red-clad vigilante who mops up the slime of the underworld? How did a boy, blinded in a freak accident, become a hero with enhanced senses and agility? Read on...

A dark alley in the darkest section of New York's--Hell's Kitchen. It's late at night and the scene is gritty, filthy...real. A pimp and two muscle-bound toadies are hassling a working

Design & Layout by Brenda Busick

girl for some shakedown dough. She's not the girl next door, but tragedy befalls the best of us, and she's just trying to survive. These three predators are threatening the girl's life, all for a percentage of her night's work. The thugs approach the desperate woman, when out of the shadows, a red-masked head with horns appears, hanging upside-down and inches away from the ringleader's face. The suddenness of the appearance strikes an initial twang of fear in the pimp as he thinks to himself, "is this the Devil?"

And in fact, it is.

"As the song goes, 'that ain't no way to treat a lady,'" says The Devil, and with a flash of red, the pimp is unconscious. The two thugs turn away from the prostitute they were man-handling and try to run. Their breathing heavy and labored, their hearts pounding in fear, the two hoods turn to check on their pursuer, who has once again vanished into the shadows. Just as they breathe a sigh of relief, one of the thugs is greeted with a whizzing billy club between the eyes, while the other receives a swift boot to the chin. Both enter the void of unconsciousness just as the shape of a red-suited figure jumps down from a nearby fire escape and walks toward the wide-eyed girl still cowering by the wall.

The Devil turns to the "victim" (there are no blacks and whites in Hell's Kitchen, only shades of gray). "Not to imply that you are in fact a lady. Might I suggest a career in something a little bit more stable? Think 401K plans and health benefits packages, and you'll be okay."

And as suddenly as he appeared, The Devil is gone.

DEALING WITH THE DEVIL

The origin of ol' Hornhead actually begins in the formative days of the Marvel Universe, when Stan Lee and his cohorts were regularly churning out new and exciting characters and titles to add to their growing stable of heroic talent. On one auspicious day, Stan Lee ran into Bill Everett, creator of **Namor, the Sub-Mariner**. Everett told Stan that he'd been thinking about trying his hand at creating another superhero, and Stan already had one in mind. So months later, in April of 1964, Daredevil became the first modern Marvel hero introduced in his own comic and the last of Marvel's early '60s original line-up.

At first similar in many respects to Spider-Man in his New York base of operations and his flippancy in battle (indeed, the two heroes would often

THE GREAT EPOCHS OF DAREDEVIL

Gene Colan's DAREDEVIL

Daredevil	Writer	Inker
#20-27	Stan Lee	Frank Giacoia
#28	Stan Lee	Dick Ayers
#29-35	Stan Lee	John Tartaglione
#36	Stan Lee	Frank Giacoia
#37	Stan Lee	John Tartaglione
#38	Stan Lee	Frank Giacoia
#39	Stan Lee	George Tuska
#40-41	Stan Lee	John Tartaglione
#42	Stan Lee	Dan Adkins
#43-45	Stan Lee	Vince Colletta
#46-49	Stan Lee	George Klein
#53-54	Roy Thomas	George Klein
#55-71 (#67 Gary Friedrich co-script; #71 Len Wein co-script)	Roy Thomas	Syd Shores
#72	Gerry Conway	Syd Shores
#73	Allyn Brodsky	Syd Shores
#74-78	Gerry Conway	Syd Shores
#79	Conway/Friedrich	Tom Palmer
#80	Gerry Conway	Tom Palmer
#81-82	Gerry Conway	Jack Abel
#84-85	Gerry Conway	Syd Shores
#86-95	Gerry Conway	Tom Palmer

Daredevil	Writer	Inker
#96	Gerry Conway	Ernie Chua
#97-98	Conway/Steve Gerber	Ernie Chua
#100	Steve Gerber	John Tartaglione
#110	Steve Gerber	Frank Chiaramonte
#112	Steve Gerber	Frank Giacoia
#116	Steve Gerber	Vince Colletta
#124	Len Wein/Marv Wolfman	Klaus Janson
#153	Roger McKenzie	Tony DeZuniga
#154	Roger McKenzie	Steve Leialoha
#156	Roger McKenzie	Klaus Janson
#157	McKenzie/Mary Jo Duffy	Klaus Janson
#363	Karl Kesel	Cam Smith w/Paul Neary
# -1	Joe Kelly	Matt Ryan
#366	Joe Kelly	Al Williamson
#367	Joe Kelly	Bud LaRosa/Harry Candelario
#368	Joe Kelly	Bud LaRosa
#370	Joe Kelly	Bud LaRosa/Harry Candelario

Note: Gene Colan is rightly known as the man who defined Daredevil's look. His sensitive pencils reflect a less-than-perfect world, but also capture the incredibly fluid motion of Matt Murdock when he is Daredevil. His recent return to the title (beginning with an odd fill-in on #363) has exposed a whole new generation of fans to his work. His new run began during Marvel's "Flashback" month with **Daredevil # -1**, one of the only "Flashback" issues to receive favorable reviews.

team up, and formed a lasting partnership in the Marvel Universe that has grown into a strong friendship—the two even know each other's identities), Daredevil nevertheless possessed some unique traits that would send him along quite a different path from that of the wall-crawler. Daredevil's original yellow and black fighting togs would also soon give way to the more distinctive red suit that has so defined the character.

After launching **Daredevil** with Stan, Everett went on to work on some other Marvel properties. EC's Joe Orlando helped with a few early issues until a permanent penciler could be found. He was aided by inker Vince Colletta. With **Daredevil** #5, the legendary Wally Wood penciled and inked issues #5-8, with Bob Powell coming on board with issue #9 with the inking duties. Wood and Powell took Daredevil to issue #11. Together, all of these men helped to lay the groundwork for the adventures to follow, and with the additional input of legendary comic book creators Gene Colan and Frank Miller, among many others (see sidebar), Daredevil grew into one of the most psychologically complex heroes of the Marvel Universe. For a man who would one day be tormented by heartache and strife both in and out of costume, Matt Murdock's youth was also one punctuated by tragedy...

BIRTH OF A DEVIL

Matthew Michael Murdock was born in late 1941/early 1942 to a second-rate boxer known as "Battling" Jack Murdock. Matt's mother died when the boy was only 8, and on her deathbed his father promised that their son would grow up with an education—something Jack never had. The boy had already shown an inclination toward higher education, and Jack was determined that his son would be encouraged in those qualities, in the hopes of escaping the neighborhood and life he had to offer him.

Right from his first appearance, Daredevil was drawn in multi-image panels to create the illusion of acrobatic movement.

As his son grew older, Jack realized he had to pay for Matt's college tuition. This would be a difficult task since his boxing career was sagging and he had no other marketable skills. Faced with a desperate situation and wanting only the best for his son, Jack signed a contract with an unscrupu-

FRANK MILLER'S DAREDEVIL

Daredevil	Writer	Penciler	Inker
#158-161	Roger McKenzie	Frank Miller	Klaus Janson
#163-166	Roger McKenzie	Frank Miller	Klaus Janson
#167	David Michelinie	Frank Miller	Klaus Janson
#168-190	Frank Miller	Miller/Janson	Klaus Janson
#191	Frank Miller	Frank Miller	Terry Austin
#219	Frank Miller	John Buscema	Gerry Talaoc
#226	Miller/Dennis O'Neil	David Mazzucchelli	Dennis Janke
#227-233	Frank Miller	David Mazzucchelli (a)	

Daredevil: The Man Without Fear
#1-5 Frank Miller John Romita, Jr. (p)
Al Williamson (i)

Marvel Graphic Novel #24
Daredevil: Love and War
Frank Miller Bill Sienkiewicz (a)

Note: During their tenure together on **Daredevil**, Frank Miller's and Klaus Janson's work became very difficult to distinguish from each other. By the end, Klaus was doing all of the illustration based on Miller's layouts, which were done on regular 8 1/2" x 11" paper. With his early stints inking and coloring the book, then penciling after Miller departed, Janson probably has the second highest number of issues on **Daredevil** after Gene Colan.

Wally Wood's Daredevil

#5-8	Stan Lee	Wally Wood	Wally Wood
#9	Stan Lee	Wally Wood/Bob Powell	Wally Wood
#10	Wally Wood	Bob Powell/Wally Wood	Wally Wood
#11	Stan Lee	Bob Powell	Wally Wood

Note: Wood inked Frank Miller on the cover of **Daredevil** #164, perhaps fitting since Wood was the first artist to double as writer/artist on the title (#10). Wood's introduction with the cover blurb on **Daredevil** #5 may mark the first such introduction a comic book artist received.

References: **The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide** (27th Edition), and **The Marvel Comics Index**, Vol. 1, Number 9B, Daredevil (1982).

— J.C. Vaughn

lous fight promoter named "The Fixer" that would later prove tragic.

On the same day, while Matt was on his way home from studying at the library, he noticed a truck (owned by a subsidiary of Stark Industries) careening out of control towards a blind man. Without thinking, Matt leapt heroically to save the stranger, only to get hit in the face by a canister containing radioactive material. Ironically, though he survived the incident, Matt himself was struck by blindness as a result. But that was only the beginning.

While in the hospital, Matt discovered that although he was blind, all of his other senses had been greatly enhanced, almost as if in compensation for his handicap. He could now hear with incredible accuracy, determine texture and material with the lightest touch, and taste with significant acuity. After recuperating, Matt fell under the tutelage of Stick, a blind, derelict Zen master that he looked to as a mentor. Stick would train Matt not only in the ways of martial arts, but in the uses of his new senses. In his time with Stick, the foundation was laid for much of Matt's later life, and it would be a time and friendship he would always value highly.

THE DEVIL AND MATT MURDOCK

In 1960, Matt entered State College as a law student. Here he met his roommate, Franklin P. "Foggy" Nelson, who remains one of his closest friends to this day. By the end of the year, both Foggy and Matt had transferred to Columbia University, which boasted a more prestigious law school. There, Matt met his first love, a young political science major named Elektra Natchios. They entered into a relationship that ended tragically with the death of Elektra's father. Terrorists held her and her father hostage, inspiring Matt to use his heightened senses for the first time. Not yet adept in the role of hero, Matt was unable to prevent the death of Elektra's father, and Elektra withdrew from Matt and the world around her. A martial artist in her own right, she joined a renegade gang of ninjas called the Hand and disappeared, only to return 19 years later, in **Daredevil** #168—an intricate story woven by Frank Miller involving Daredevil, Elektra, Bullseye, Kingpin, the Hand, and a host of others.

Following Elektra's initial departure, Matt continued his education in law school. Jack's boxing career was also going along nicely until the Fixer ordered him to take a dive. Unfortunately, Jack was made of nobler stuff, and dropped his opponent rather than turn crooked, only to be rewarded for his insolence by being gunned down minutes after the bout. Heartbroken and orphaned, Matt struggled to finish law school, and did so at the top of his class. He and Foggy then opened their own law practice and hired a young woman named Karen Page as their secretary. She soon became Matt's on-and-off-again love interest for many years, with a tumultuous relationship that continues in current issues of **Daredevil**.

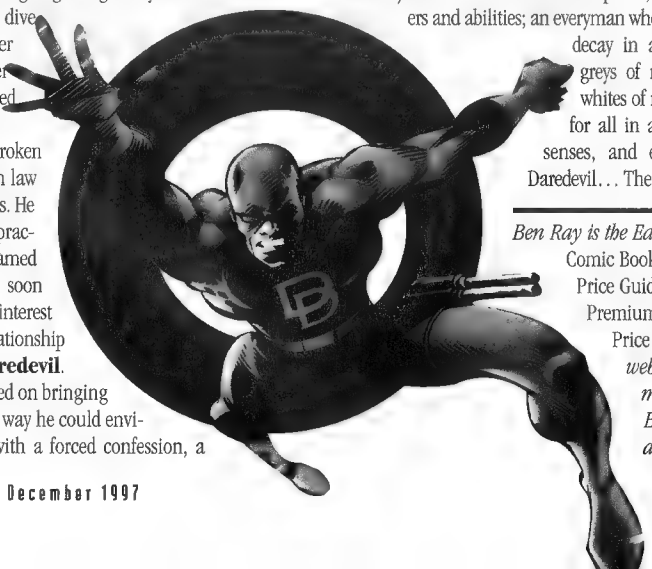
Meanwhile, Matt had become fixated on bringing his father's killers to justice. The only way he could envision this happening, however, was with a forced confession, a practice not allowed within the confines of the law. Faced with this dilemma, and with the same determination that drove his father to seek a better future for his son, Matt fashioned a new identity for himself that could pursue his father's killers without hindrance—a hero that would strike fear into the hearts of the criminal world (does that sound similar to fans of a certain Dark Knight Detective?).

This persona would enable him to put his father's memory to rest, and allow him to fight for justice beyond the limits of the law. To complete the alter-ego, Matt took the moniker of Daredevil, a childhood nickname once used to taunt him, now a symbol of his confidence and adventurous spirit. At first adopting a yellow-and-red motif, Matt soon settled on the distinctive red suit that all criminals recognize as the mantle of the defender of Hell's Kitchen—Daredevil.

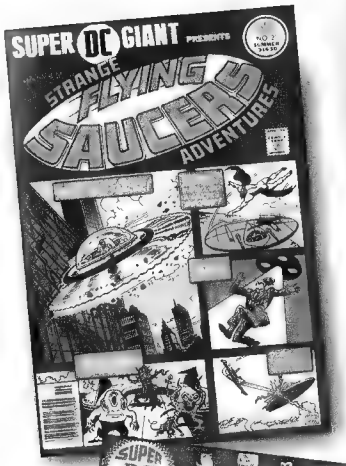
DEVIL WITH THE RED SUIT ON

Over the years, Matt Murdock and his devilish alter ego would face more trials and tribulations than almost any other hero in the Marvel Universe. Aside from his ongoing personal troubles with Karen Page (who would sink into the world of drug addiction and eventually emerge a new woman with a fresh start), Matt would soon face one of the most powerful underworld leaders in New York City—the Kingpin. Originally introduced as a member of Spider-Man's stable of villains, the Kingpin would become Matt's mortal enemy, tormenting him in all aspects of his life. As both hero and lawyer, Matt would be forced to tangle with the rotund criminal mastermind on countless occasions, and their feud still continues to this day. The Kingpin has managed to break Daredevil more than once, dragging him through the mud, leaving him without a home or job, and with barely enough faith left to crawl back out of the dirt and survive to face another day. And yet, through it all, Daredevil has returned to confound the Kingpin and his corrupt minions again and again.

Through the process of avenging his father's death, Matt became a hero unlike any other in the Marvel stable, the only one who could plunge into the darkest, dirtiest depths of the Marvel Universe and emerge with his soul intact; a hero that was blind, one whose very name suggested the ambiguity of the justice he was dedicated to uphold; a hero with few special powers and abilities; an everyman who dove into the filth of urban decay in an attempt to separate the greys of reality into the blacks and whites of morality. He is a man, taken for all in all—a man with enhanced senses, and enhanced courage. He is Daredevil... The Man Without Fear.

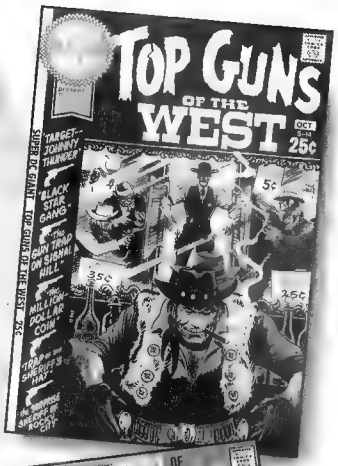


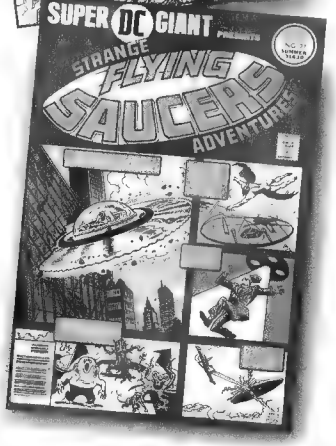
Ben Ray is the Editor of the Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide, The Hake's Price Guide to Character Toy Premiums, Overstreet's Toy Ring Price Guide, *and the Gemstone website, and is a well known movie critic for a Baltimore's city paper and a long time Daredevil fan.*



What the heck is an S-13

Collecting Super DC Giants of the 1970s





BY BILL ALEXANDER ▶

My first discovery of a Super DC Giant

comic book was not that long ago. I remember about four years ago attending a sale at R&K Comics, a local comic shop here in Sunnyvale, California. On the counter there was a long box of miscellaneous comics consisting mainly of '60's and '70's material. As I thumbed through the box I came across a strange looking DC romance book that simply had the words "Love 1970" printed across the front cover, and over in the upper left hand corner I noticed a logo that read *Super DC Giant*. "I've never seen this comic before," I said to myself and plucked it out of the box and added it to the stack of comics I was about to purchase.

I then arrived home and went straight to my *Overstreet Annual Price Guide* and looked up the title *Super DC Giant* and to my surprise found that there were fourteen other *Super DC Giant* issues in the series. From that day on, I was fully committed to my search to try and complete a run of these comics. Amazingly enough, a few years later, I finally completed the run.

Super DC Giants are not only interesting to collectors of the '90s, they were fascinating comics to come across back in the Summer of 1970 when they first came out. *Super DC Giants* are giant sized, 64-page comics, except for the last issue which is a 48-pager. All are reprint issues except for *Super DC Giant* #S-15 which features the introduction of a western character named "Half Breed" and contains the original story and art (by Gil Kane no less).

To add to the collector and historian interest (and confusion), *Super DC Giant* numbering did not begin with issue #1 as one might expect. For some strange reason unknown to me, DC began the series with the issue #S-13 which was a *Binky* reprint issue. The issue numbering went #S-13 through #S-26 and #27. Oddly enough, issue #27 did not have an (S) prefix in its numbering. Can anyone out there tell us what the (S) prefix on the numbering of *Super DC Giants* stands for? Could it stand for *Super DC Giant*? The answer to that question continues to be a mystery to all the collectors that I know... perhaps some knowledgeable *CBM* reader could educate us all.

Another interesting facet of *Super DC Giants* is that they cover several different genres. For example, issue #S-13 reprints *Binky*, #S-18 reprints *Three Mousketeers*, and #S-19 reprints *Jerry Lewis*... all considered "esoteric" by most collectors. The western genre is also represented with *Super DC Giant* #S-14 and #S-22 (*Top Guns of the West*) and #S-15 (*Western Comics*). Some of the more familiar and most popular issues are #S-16 (*Brave and Bold*), #S-24 (*Super Girl*), #S-25 (*Challengers of the Unknown*), #S-26 (*Aquaman*), #S-20 (*House of Mystery*), and #S-23 (*The Unexpected*).

One of the most amazing aspects of the title is the frequency of publication. Astonishingly, DC released the first five Super DC Giant issues #S-13 through #S-17 in a period of one month! That's right... five *Super DC Giants* on the stands within 30 days, released about a week apart. All were September/October issues!

Are *Super DC Giants* easy to find? The verdict is still out on this one, but the collectors I've surveyed suggest that the answer is "no." Further, certain *Super DC Giant* issues are truly scarce! For example, #S-21, S-17, S-19, S-18 and S-13 are seldom seen in any grade and are almost impossible to find in high grade!

I am asked from time to time which *Super DC Giant* issue is *the* most difficult to locate. In my opinion, it's issue #S-21! As far as I can tell there were no house ads for issue #S-21. Dan Owens, of Nevada (an avid DC collector) has attended the last seven San Diego Comic Conventions in hopes of finding a copy of *Super DC Giant* #S-21. Dan regrettably reports that he's still searching!

I've found that the best way to locate *Super DC Giants* at comic shops or comic cons is to look for a feature in the Giant rather than asking for the *Super DC Giant* title. For example: *Super DC Giant* #S-24 features Supergirl and will most likely be filed away under "Supergirl comics." *Super DC Giant* #S-26 features Aquaman, and is usually filed under "Aquaman comics."

This system works well for all but two issues. The exceptions are *Super DC Giant* #S-17 and S-21, both "love" issues, neither of which is associated with a title or character! Nine out of ten times I've found these scarce members of the run filed simply under the title heading "romance comics" or mixed in with other love and romance comic titles. This probably helps to explain why these two *Super DC Giant* love issues are so darn hard to find.

There are several great reasons why collecting *Super DC Giants* is so intriguing... there's the wonderful variety of contents... esoteric material, superheroes, scarce non-reprint "one shots," DC mystery, westerns, and romance. There's the fact that they were published in a "giant" comic format. There's the bizarre numbering system. And if all that doesn't get you interested, consider that their *Guide* values are extremely low, that they were published at the cusp of the Silver Age and the Bronze Age (all but one are over 25 years old now), and that many of the issues are truly scarce!

If you like to collect short, relatively inexpensive, and interesting runs... *Super DC Giants* is worth a second look!

Bill Alexander collects mainly early DC Bronze Age comics and enjoys meeting and talking with people who share his love for comics. In real life Bill works as an electronics technician. Special thanks to Jon McClure.

CBM CHECKLIST

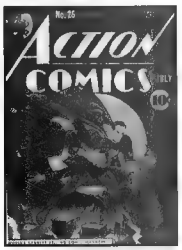
SUPER DC GIANTS

#S-13 Binky (Sep/Oct 1970)
#S-14 Top Guns of the West (Sep/Oct 1970)
#S-15 Western Comics (Sep/Oct 1970)
#S-16 Brave and the Bold (Sep/Oct 1970)
#S-17 Love 1970 (Sep/Oct 1970)
#S-18 Three Mousketeers (Oct/Nov 1970)
#S-19 Jerry Lewis (Oct/Nov 1970)
#S-20 House of Mystery (Oct/Nov 1970)
#S-21 Love 1971 (Jan/Feb 1971)
#S-22 Top Guns of the West (Feb/Mar 1971)
#S-23 The Unexpected (Mar/Apr 1971)
#S-24 Supergirl (May/Jun 1971)
#S-25 Challengers of the Unknown (Jun/Jul 1971)
#S-26 Aquaman (Jul/Aug 1971)
#27 Strange Flying Saucer Adventures (Summer 1976)

Talk about low prices! The most expensive issue lists for $15, and the entire run is only $114 in NM!

WORLDS FINEST COMICS & COLLECTIBLES IS PROUD TO INTRODUCE ONE OF THE GREATEST ORIGINAL GOLDEN AGE COLLECTIONS EVER TO SURFACE!

THE ROCKFORD COLLECTION



Each book from this Magnificent collection was purchased from a small drug store in Rockford Illinois between the years 1938 - 1950. Hence the name - **The Rockford Collection**.

The collection contains nearly 2000 Golden age comic books, including deep runs of some very popular titles, such as **Detective, Action, Bat Man, Superman, Adventure, World's Finest, All Star, More Fun, Military, Wow, Daredevil, Master, Captain Marvel, National, Police, Planet, Jungle, Jumbo**, **Wings**, and **many more**!

The owner of this collection was a true collector, who loved reading his comics and had aspirations of becoming a comic book artist himself one day. He was very meticulous in the storage and care of his books, making sure that they were covered, kept dry, evenly stacked, and even alternated the spines to avoid spine rolls. Because of this extraordinary care, the overall quality of this collection is exceptionally nice, making this one of the **highest quality collections ever to surface**. While there are several hundred books in the **GD** to **VG/FN** range, there are also several hundred in the **FN** range, and almost **1000** in the **VF to NM range! Incredible!**

PEDIGREE STATUS? After discussing this issue at length with Bob Overstreet, Gary Carter, Jon Berk, and many other knowledgeable experts, it was explained to me that Pedigree status is determined by size of the collection, condition, and depth, but most importantly - the Market acceptance. Based on a small sampling of books I brought with me to the San Diego Comic Convention, this is definitely a very special collection! The books sold very fast (at above Guide prices) - **to dealers** - who then resold them at even higher prices.

This collection is twice as large as the **Larson** collection and contains far more high grade books. It dwarfs the **Allentown, San Francisco, Pennsylvania, Denver, Cosmic Aeroplane, and Comstock** collections. Only the gigantic **Edgar Church** "Mile High" collection can boast more high grade books than the **Rockford** collection.

A COMPLETE LISTING OF THIS HISTORIC COLLECTION WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MY CUSTOMERS IN UPCOMING ISSUES OF MY GIANT PHOTO ILLUSTRATED CATALOG.

ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY!

ISSUE # 32 IS NOW ON SALE!

VISA MasterCard

IMPORTANT NOTE:
All books will be sold as is, in their **original unrestored** condition. Not even the covers will be cleaned.

$3 per issue
$11 for a one year subscription
Sent First class
Foreign orders- please add an additional $1 per issue

All books will be carefully cataloged and beautifully presented in Gerber's new lock top Mylar system. A high quality certificate and sticker will accompany each book clearly identifying it as a **Rockford** copy, including a written disclosure stating the absence of restoration.

WORLD'S FINEST COMICS & COLLECTIBLES

P.O. Box 340 Castle Rock, WA 98611 **Phone** - (360) 274-9163 **Fax #** - (360) 274-2270

Continued from page 36

designed and created the badge, because the artist's rendition was much closer to the now familiar shape and art. Likewise the card pictured in the ad is a facsimile of the true card (Type A). Interestingly, the Sentinels of Liberty concept had already been hashed out even before *Captain America* #1. An ad in *Human Torch* #2 (#3) hyped the badge and card; and it heralded the release of *Captain America* #1, still yet to hit the stands. The Sentinels of Liberty idea was a brilliant one in that it anticipated the marketing power of neighborhood kids. If a kid wanted the badge, logic dictates that they'd have to go out and buy a *Captain America* comic; and then, when they'd gotten the Membership Kit, their loyalty to the comic was more solidified than it might have been without the club. Kids would have been interested in any developments affecting all Sentinels which were routinely mentioned right up until the end of the war in *Captain America Comics*. At one point, there was also a secret code published in the comic for the benefit of all Sentinels

ADVERTISEMENT FROM CAP #9 (Dec 1941). This ad would lend credence to the theory that Timely didn't order the badges from the manufacturer until a minimum amount of memberships had been received from readers.

A MESSAGE FROM CAPTAIN AMERICA
TO EVERY ONE OF THE THOUSANDS OF RED-BLOODED YOUNG AMERICANS WHO SO WILLINGLY VOLUNTEERED TO JOIN CAPTAIN AMERICA'S GREAT ARMY OF SPY-SMASHERS!
SENTINELS OF LIBERTY:
BUCKY AND I WISH TO THANK EACH OF YOU FOR YOUR SWELL RESPONSE TO OUR CALL FOR YOUR HELP IN RIDDING THE U.S.A. OF THE TRAITORS WHO WISH TO DESTROY IT. TO THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE NOT YET RECIEVED YOUR BADGES, THEY ARE ON THE WAY AND IT WON'T BE LONG NOW—
YOUR GOOD FRIEND AND FELLOW PATRIOT—
Captain America
HERE IS HOW YOU CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF..
CAPTAIN AMERICA'S SENTINELS OF LIBERTY
JOIN CAPTAIN AMERICA IN HIS WAR AGAINST THE SPIES AND ENEMIES IN OUR MIDST WHO THREATEN OUR VERY INDEPENDENCE...
SEND 10¢ to TIMELY COMICS, INC. 330 WEST 42 ND ST. NEW YORK, N.Y.
TO COVER COST OF MAILING AND RECEIVE A REAL OFFICIAL BADGE AND MEMBERSHIP CARD!
SEND THIS COUPON
THIS IS NOT A PICTURE BUTTON TOY BUT A REAL HIGH QUALITY BADGE MADE OF THE SAME METAL USED IN POLICE AND FIREMEN BADGES—
I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN CAPTAIN AMERICA'S "SENTINELS OF LIBERTY" & HELP TO FIGHT SPIES AND TRAITORS TO THE U.S.A.
I AM INCLOSING 10¢ FOR WHICH PLEASE SEND ME THE BADGE & MEMBERSHIP CARD
NAME
ADDRESS
CITY & STATE

Both the Type A and Type B cards have numbering on the back next to the line where the young members would sign. Of the cards known to exist, the numbers range from approximately 11000 to 72000 (no commas for place value). All of the Type B cards known to exist have a number larger than 50000. If the number placed on the back exactly correlates to the number of Sentinel members (and we accept it at face value), then it is likely that the Type B card was redesigned and the wording slightly changed after the first 50,000 cards ran out. An ad for the sentinels touted that "more than 20,000" had already joined and the goal was to attain 100,000 members. If *Superman* #1 had a printing of more than 1.5 million and around 150 exist, the ratio would be 1 copy surviving for every 10,000 printed. Consider that a card and envelope would have a comparable (if not higher) attrition rate, and it doesn't seem so far-fetched that 72,000 cards or more were made (with 12 currently known to exist).

Numbers, however, can be misleading. There is great debate as to the validity of this number as it is the only thing which points to any continuity in the life of the club. There is even some speculation that—if there was some significance attached to the "serial number"—the number in the ones place could have been stamped on as a "placebo" afterthought to convince each new member that the Sentinels roster was 10 times larger than it actually was. All kinds of scenarios (paranoid an otherwise) can be postulated here, but at this point, the only surviving evidence (unless some "in-office" documents at Marvel still exist) leads to little more than conjecture regarding the actual number produced.

The envelopes known to exist were "postage-paid" so there is no cancellation date to validate the time the club ran. It is likely that memberships to the club were solicited no later than *Captain America Comics* #33 (cover dated December 1943) as in that issue Cap implored kids to cease from sending their dimes for memberships as the country needed the metal from the badge for "guns, tanks, bullets, ships, planes!" The editors of Cap commonly appealed to the Sentinels to save paper or perform other acts of patriotism during the war well after the memberships had ceased to be solicited. Indeed, Bucky suggests an alternative to spending the dime on a badge... "how about using that dime for a war savings stamp?" It should be noted that among comic book character Membership Kit envelopes, this is one of only two which has an illustration on it (the other being Capt. Marvel). The others were limited to text. It has been confirmed that there is a second variation of the envelope with a slightly different font size and shape.

Paper products tend to have a higher attrition rate than comparably dated metal or even plastic objects. As a result, considerably more badges have been seen over the years. The consensus is that there are estimated to be 75 to 100 badges (including both varieties) in varying condition out there. Unlike the card and envelope, where the numbers known to exist can be substantiated, it is believed that there is a sizable

amount more of the badges which are unsubstantiated (my scramble to get the card and envelope over the years made me less cognizant of existing badge data... I wasn't as worried about being able to locate the badges). Two of the collectors polled have suggested that there could be as many as 200 badges in existence, but this was based on the old "for every one we know of, there are five more we don't know of" premise.

The so called "Copper" badge can be attracted by a magnet, while the so called "Brass" version cannot. This is currently the most decisive method to tell the difference, as previous descriptions of color or gloss are not definitive and remain somewhat misleading. Varying conditions of the metals can obscure their appearance, but the brass has a more shiny gold appearance and copper has a slightly red (as a penny) appearance. The back of the authorized reproduction from 1990 has a crosshatched texture, and the badge itself is about one full millimeter in thickness. The original badges are both less than a 1/2 millimeter in thickness and neither has the crosshatched texture to the back. Additionally, the eyes on Cap's face in the original badges have small round pupils on the underside of the eyelids. On the reproduction, the eyes inside the mask are more like almonds—without any round pupils beneath the eyelids. There are other minor differences on the face, but these are the most definitive ways to tell.

Some care should be taken before sending money so as to confirm the validity of the badge being purchased. It should be noted that this is only one of two badges ever offered as a comic book premium—the other being the Junior Justice Society of America Badge (which lacks the illustration of a character). In the future, I hope to quantitatively assess the badges for the various types of metal used (base, coatings, and otherwise). Maybe there is somebody out there with experience in metallurgy who could offer some solutions to this age old issue.

It also should be mentioned that this is the only Timely/Marvel premium until the Marvel Mania/M.M.M.S. merchandise was promoted during the mid-1960s. [The only other Timely related (non-comic book) items put out during the Golden Age were the Captain America Movie Serial promotions, and Stan Lee's *Secrets Behind the Comics*. A few one-of-a-kind syndicate promotionals were found by Don Maris and mentioned in his article in *Overstreet's Advanced Collector* #1.]

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but just when you thought you had located all of the items connected to this kit, (the envelope, two badges, and two cards), you really have one more item to locate if you want "everything"—turns out you also need the Sentinels of Liberty postcard which was mailed separately from the Membership Kit to Sentinels (for what had to be a very limited time). Unfortunately, there is only one (1) of them known to exist. Much of the appeal and mystique of the Captain America Sentinels of Liberty Membership Kit lies in its unmatched graphic design on all pieces of the kit. It was a marketing ploy which capitalized fully upon the patriotic fervor of the time and did so in a particularly classy fashion.

Using Captain America as the ultimate patriot, The Sentinels of Liberty Membership Kit provides a clear and fascinating view into the propaganda machine American society had created and maintained during World War II... and it's a wonderful early 1940's collectible as well!

HERE
IS HOW YOU CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF...
CAPTAIN AMERICA'S
SENTINELS OF LIBERTY
and JOIN CAPTAIN AMERICA IN HIS WAR AGAINST THE SPIES AND ENEMIES IN OUR MIDST WHO THREATEN OUR VERY INDEPENDENCE....
SEND
10¢
Member SENTINELS of LIBERTY
I SOLEMNLY PLEDGE TO UPHOLD THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SENTINELS OF LIBERTY AND ASSIST CAPTAIN AMERICA IN HIS WAR AGAINST SPIES IN THE U.S.A.
SIGNED_____

ADVERTISEMENT FROM CAPTAIN AMERICA #1 (Mar 1941) Note the badge with three faces (including Betty Ross). The badge pictured clearly depicts a "No. 58" which has no apparent purpose except to deceive impressionable young readers into believing that each badge would have been individually serialized. The alternative was to serialize the card instead.

SENTINELS OF LIBERTY

Number of specimens still in existence and Values ranges

Description	Specimens	Value Range
Brass Badge	40-60 est.	$400— $1200
Copper Badge	20-40 est.	$500— $1300
Repro Badge	2500 made	$25— $35
Card Type A	6 known	$900— $1400
Card Type B	6 known	$900— $1400
Envelope	12 known	$800— $1500
Postcard	1 known	value unknown

Continued from page 35

Army guys, dressed in civvies, were driven to "a shabby tenement district," pulled up at "a sinister looking curio shop," and were met by an apparently crone-like old lady who got a gun out of a drawer when she saw them come in the door. After satisfying herself that her visitors were legit, she admitted, "The formula has been found...they are waiting for you now!"

In scenes that would soon become comic book legend, the three visitors were ushered into a secret chamber housing "a surprisingly modern laboratory." The crone peeled off her mask and stood revealed as "an astoundingly beautiful young woman," whom Grover described as "X-13, one of our most trusted agents!" And all of them, plus one newcomer, settled down behind a glass partition to watch what was to come.

In front of the glass, white-coated Professor Reinstein faced a bare-chested, "frail young man" named Steve Rogers. "Don't be afraid, son" reassured the scientist. "You are about to become one of America's saviors!" And with that, he stuck a hypodermic needle filled with a "strange, seething liquid" into Rogers' arm. While Reinstein told his observers how Rogers had volunteered for the Army, was rejected as 4F, and then became part of their secret project, the skinny guy was bulking out to a muscular configuration even Charles Atlas would have died for. Finally, a new Steve Rogers stood in place of the old, taller, bigger, more fit in every way.

"Behold!" said Reinstein. "The crowning achievement of all my years of hard work! The first of a corps of super-agents whose mental and physical ability will make them a terror to spies and saboteurs! We shall call you Captain America, son! Because like you—America shall gain the strength and the will to safeguard our shores!"

Seconds later, another now-familiar scene occurred: one of the observers, actually one of Hitler's Army spies, hollered, "Death to the dogs of democracy!," drew a gun, shot out the glass in the observation booth, and killed Reinstein. He also shattered the vial of serum which had caused Rogers' physical reformation. He then proceeded to shoot at Grover and the generals. And that was the last thing he had a chance to do before Rogers reached in, grabbed him by the collar, and yanked him through what was left of the glass

window, snarling, "Come on out, you skunk!" The super-soldier uncorked two powerful punches that had the Nazi turning somersaults.

"Half-crazed with fear and pain—the spy stumbles into the laboratory equipment in a frantic effort to escape the terrific beating!" The current from the gadgets electrocuted him. "Nothing left of him but charred ashes...a fate he well deserved!" pronounced Rogers.

One panel later, he finally got into costume.

The scene showed the three-colored crusader charging towards us with a batch of newspaper headlines proclaiming his spy-busting successes. A caption read, "Although the wonder serum has been destroyed—its first creation, Captain America, becomes a powerful force in the battle against spies and saboteurs!" We didn't have much space left, but a one-panel shot of a shadowy Cap approaching a bearded and monocled spy showed the spy properly terrified.

From that, we segued into a scene at the Army's Camp Lehigh. Private Steve Rogers, now in khaki garb, was being hailed by Bucky Barnes, the kid who was "mascot of the regiment," and told all about Captain America's latest exploit in the newspapers. Bucky turned up later, in Rogers' tent, and was astonished to see Steve in the process of changing into his Captain America outfit. As Cap admitted his double identity, Bucky spluttered, "Gosh...gee whiz...golly!!! I...I never thought..." Cap solemnly declared, "From now on we must both share the secret together...that means you're my partner, Bucky!"

The last panel proper of the story showed Bucky, in costume, charging with Cap across a star-spangled backdrop towards some deed which needed derring-do. The last third of the page was taken up by an ad for Captain America's Sentinel of Liberty, which you could join for a dime and entitled you to a "real official badge and membership card!" The card read, "I solemnly pledge to uphold the principles of the Sentinels of Liberty and assist Captain America in his war against spies in the USA"

And all that took just eight pages!

Betty/Betsy Who?

In the second story, Cap and Bucky dealt with Sando and Omar, a pair of "mentalists" who were a front for a Nazi spy ring. In the course of the adventure, Captain America and his boy ally were captured by the baddies, alongside a blonde beauty who introduced herself thusly: "Betty Ross is the name, Captain. It seems we both have an interest in the same case!" "Ain't she pretty, Cap?" remarked Bucky, his arms pinned behind him by a burly thug. Betty admitted she was a government agent. Seconds later, Cap broke free, clobbered Sando and his gang, and passed an automatic to Betty, saying, "Keep Krantz covered till the FBI arrives!"

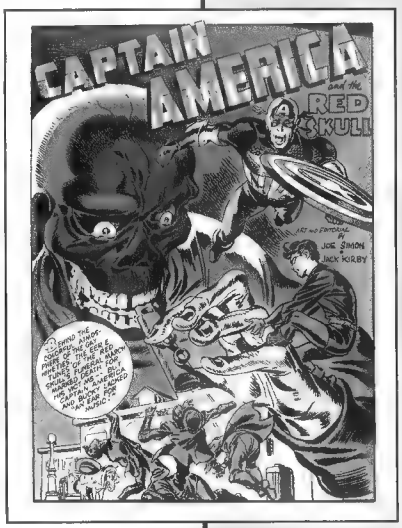
"Yes...but wait—you can't go!" protested Betty. "I want to thank you!"

"Perhaps some other time," mused Cap as he and Bucky disappeared into the night, "leaving behind them a wrecked spy-ring and puzzled girl!"

Betty Ross was Captain America's romantic interest, and the longest-running supporting character in the book, save for Bucky. She was competent, capable, and pretty, though she often got the damsel-in-distress role for all that. Her name was obviously derived from Betsy Ross, the legendary designer of the American flag, and in later issues she was indeed called "Betsy." (In 1962, Stan Lee appropriated her name for the Hulk's girlfriend.) She appeared frequently in the Simon and Kirby issues. A bio piece in issue

Cap #7, supposedly written by Captain America to his fans, revealed that she had been the daughter of an American general who got killed by Axis spies (not at all an unusual occurrence for military brass in a Timely comic) and was inspired to become a "G-Girl" for the FBI. Then she turned up later as a WAC lieutenant. After the war, she did a one-shot stint as an insurance investigator. Then she played her most important role in the series...and we'll cover that later too.

When Stan Lee and Jack Kirby retold the Sando and Omar story in *Tales of Suspense* #64, they renamed Betty "Agent Thirteen" to avoid the name conflict with the Hulk's leading lady. The connections between Betty, Agent Thirteen (who was later named Peggy Carter), and the later Agent Thirteen (Peggy's sister, Sharon Carter) are murky and have never been dealt with in the comics. They probably never will be. But, since she was at least as substantial a character as Sub-Mariner's Namora or the Human Torch's Sun Girl, she shouldn't be dismissed as nonexistent by present day Marvelites.



Enter Sgt. Mike Duffy

In the next story, "The Chess-Board of Death," Cap and Bucky defeated the plot of Major Rathcone, a bespectacled, bug-eyed Nazi spy, but not before the villain's hirelings killed an admiral and a general. The life expectancy of high military officials in Captain America stories was not great—at the most, two pages. The villains always had to prove their moxie by knocking off at least one top official per story. It was safer to be a non-com.

In "Chess Board," Cap's other supporting character was introduced. Steve Rogers' boss, Sgt. Mike Duffy, was the great comic relief of the strip. He was tough, he was rough, and he despaired of ever making Steve Rogers anything other than a first rate foul-up. If he ordered Rogers to march in a straight line until ordered to stop, you can bet Duffy would forget, stand in Rogers' path, look the other way, and get knocked sprawling into his prize garden while trying to impress Miss Ross. He had a stock response to such matters, and Steve Rogers spent so much time in the guardhouse that he probably had a reserved cell. Thankfully, it wasn't as bad as in *From Here To Eternity*. And when things looked dire, Steve could always pull out the window bars and turn into Captain America. (Later, he probably put them back.) Anyway, Duffy held on through issue #47, almost to the end of the war. Except for flashback stories in *Tales of Suspense* and *The Invaders*, we never saw him again.

Enter the Red Skull

But it was the fourth story that really capped off Cap with a classic villain. Written by Ed Herron and rewritten by Jack and Joe, "The Riddle of the Red Skull," in terms of opposition, was just what the Fuehrer ordered.

We got our first glimpse of the Red Skull on the splash page, and his appearance left no doubt as to his allegiance. A crimson death's -head wearing a coal-scuttle helmet emblazoned with a swastika, symbolically crushing

Silver Age Censor

Quite a few of the S & K Cap stories were reprinted in the 1960s, in Marvel's Fantasy Masterpieces. This began with two stories from **Cap** #3 in the third issue of FM and continued with selected tales from **Captain America Comics** #4-7 and 10, including the Red Skull story from issue #7. The stories still held up well, even in the Marvel Age. But one thing was unknown to most of the young readers in 1966: most of the stories had been censored.

The original Captain America stories were not for the weak at heart. Simon and Kirby had studded their stories with ruthless Fascist grotesqueries, as if Hitler had chosen his agents from the Universal Pictures monster unit. Their method was murder, and that most graphically. It wasn't as raw as the Charlie Biro stuff, but it was too much for modern Marvel. Many panels had to be redrawn, and much dialogue had to be rewritten, before the Comics Code would allow the stories to be reprinted.

Some concrete examples: In **Fantasy Masterpieces** #3, "The Hunchback of Hollywood and the Movie Murder"– on the splash, the Hunchback is grotty enough in appearance, but, in **Cap** #3, he had one blanked-out eye and slavering jaws. On page 3, panel 2, a movie mogul is punched; in the original, the Hunchback strangles him. On page 10, the Hunchback is shown choking an actress in the original: it was redrawn from another perspective to eliminate the woman entirely.

The next reprinted story was originally titled, "The Queer Case of the Murdering Butterfly and the Ancient Mummies!" It was renamed "The Strange Case of the Plundering Butterfly..." In the reprint, the costumed Butterfly merely flies at and punches out his victims; in the original, he pierces their bodies with his rapier-like snout and kills them. On page 9, in the reprint, a hulking thug menaces Cap with a throwing knife; Cap breaks off a mammoth skeleton's tusk and throws it at his jaw, knocking him out; the villain cries, "MY JAW! YAAAA!" In the original, Cap throws that tusk right through the bad guy's body and kills him, while the baddie screams, "I KILL! Kill–YAAAA!"

And my favorite of all, from Captain America #10 and Fantasy Masterpieces #6: in "The Phantom Hound of Cardiff Moor," in the reprint, Cap is struggling to the death with a gigantic mastiff, and manages to close its jaws with his hands before it can bite him. In the original, he isn't nearly so lucky. The dog chomps him, and darn near bites through his arm.

an Allied plane in his hand, brass knuckles showing. The jaw of his red skull-mask sagged as if it were a real skull. Cap and Bucky were pounding away at his hirelings in the rest of the splash, but we could sense that the Skull himself would prove a tougher customer.

The story proper started with Steve and Bucky showing one Major Croy to his Broadway home, and asking if he didn't need them to remain on guard. "Poppycock," said Croy, who had received a threatening note. "Go back to camp, Rogers...I'm in no danger! There's no such person as The Red Skull!"

A page later, a window in the Major's study opened. A grim, green-garbed figure with a white swastika on his chest and a red death's head skull on his head entered. "Good evening, Major!" were his first words, uttered just before he leaped on his quarry, hands on Croy's throat. "Stare into my eyes, Major! Look until you see death!" And, as he looked, Major Croy died.

Later, the killing was discovered, and Cap went "skull-hunting" on his own, leaving Bucky behind as a precaution. Bucky went out, found the Skull's headquarters, got captured, and was held by the Skull as bait for Captain America. Afterward, the Skull intoned, "he shall look through my eye at death!"

But Captain America barged through the door of the Skull's hideout seconds later, smashing it to splinters. He proceeded to wallop the living hell out of the Skull's men and rescue Bucky. The Red Skull took it on the lam. A day later, Steve Rogers and Bucky Barnes stood with other soldiers, in the presence of George Maxon of the Maxon Aircraft Corporation, watching the test of a new warplane. The plane crashed, with no survivors. "Oh, dear me...and such a lovely plane, too! Tsk, tsk!" remarked Maxon.

"What about the men who died in it?" blurted Rogers. He got a reprimand from a general.

The general ended up dead that night, looking into the Red Skull's eyes. But Captain America appeared seconds later, fought with the Skull, and got knocked out by a swung chair. The Red Skull grabbed him and dragged him upright, snarling, "Weakling! Wake up and look into my eyes...look at death!"

Bucky entered, kicked the Skull in the tuchis, and bought time for Cap to recover. Two punches from Cap, and the Skull's headgear disintegrated. "Can you beat that?" said Bucky. "The skull was only a false face!" And behind it was the dazed face of George Maxon.

The Skull's "gaze of death" was effected by nothing more supernatural than a hypodermic full of poison. Cap confronted the recovered Skull with it, saying, "Your plan was to scare your victims out of their wits and then inject this poison into them, making them believe you killed them with your eyes!" (Why it would make any difference to a victim how he killed them, we have no idea.) "That wrecked plane was your fault, too! It'll take more than you to lick this country."

At that, the Skull broke free, grappled with Bucky, and rolled over on his own hypodermic. He lay still. Bucky exclaimed to Cap, "But you saw it all—why didn't you stop him from killing himself?" "I'm not talking, Bucky!" said Cap, sagely.

The story ended with Cap calling in reporters, who found Maxon's body and, on it, a letter from Hitler himself, promising him the post of minister of American industry once the US had been conquered. "And so ends the bloody career of George Maxon...alias the Red Skull!" finished a caption.

Fat chance! He was too good a villain to kill.

By #3, the Red Skull was up and running again. He had immunized himself to his poison, and he simply got up and left after Cap and Bucky had left the scene. His gimmick this time was a big earth-drilling vehicle that collapsed baseball stadiums and subway tunnels and caused untold deaths and property damage. Our heroes found him, pounded him, and appeared to blow him up along with his diabolical digger.

But, as Timely's equivalent of The Joker, the Red Skull was never to stay dead for long, not even—as we shall later see—after he was sent to Hell.

The Skull's third appearance may have been his most memorable. Issue #7, with a story simply called "The Red Skull," led off with an eerie splash page by Kirby featuring a huge Skull looming over the scene, killing victims with no more deadly a weapon than a flute. The second page began with two of the Red Skull's henchmen separating, one of them holding a bag of ill-gotten gains. It ended with the bag holder hearing the Chopin's Funeral March played on a flute just seconds before he was shot to death. The Skull, holding an automatic, grinned satanically and said to the corpse. "You always were a half-brain, Kroft! You were an idiot to think the Red Skull dead!"

The Nazi nemesis proceeded to kill another military officer and kidnap a general, evading Captain America until, in a final encounter, he was knocked into a river. He didn't surface, but Cap, Bucky, and the readers knew that believing the Red Skull dead was the sheerest optimism.

A New Shield

Issue #2 gave Captain America a "new look" of sorts. The big change was in his shield. He dropped the triangular model and came up with a round shield, much like the one he carries today. The big difference was in its color: in the Golden Age, one stripe of Cap's shield was blue. The artists never quite agreed how many stripes to put on Cap's shield, or where the blue one was supposed to go, but one of them really was blue. (In the 1950's, John Romita sidestepped the issue by not drawing any shield stripes at all.) The blue stripe had been colored red in reprints so as not to conflict with the new Cap's

CAP & THE YOUNG ALLIES

Captain America actually spawned **Young Allies Comics**, which combined Bucky and the Torch's young sidekick, Toro, with their non-costumed kid-gang pals Knuckles, Jeff, and Whitewash, in epic sagas against Nazi saboteurs. The outfit had really started as Captain America's Sentinels of Liberty, which began as a "real" club, then was featured in text and comic stories in **Captain America Comics**. By **Young Allies** #1, the comic book version of the S.O.L. was renamed and put to work fighting the Red Skull in a 60-page extravaganza. Captain America and the Human Torch got into the action on that one and in several other issues as well. The Young Allies became one of the most famed, long-lived, and memorable kid gangs of the Forties, rivaled only by Daredevil's Little Wise Guys, and had regular gigs in many Timely anthology comics.

image. Also, Cap's mask was anchored to a neckpiece, and the stripes were stripped off his back. This fashion innovation continued until *Avengers* #4 in 1964, in which Jack Kirby restored his all-around stripes.

Simon and Kirby's reign over the next eight issues provided a body of work comparable to the O'Neil/Adams *Green Lantern/Green Arrow*, a small and consecutive batch of issues to which the rest of the series would inevitably be compared. It is not at all true that good work left *Captain America Comics* when S&K departed. Many of the stories that followed, particularly by Otto Binder, Stan Lee, Al Avison, and Syd Shores, were excellent. But nobody would ever be able to quite equal the quality of art, writing, and excitement that Jack and Joe loaded into their Cap opuses in *Captain America Comics* #1-10 and *All-Winners Comics* #1-2. Decades later, Jack Kirby still regarded Captain America as his ultimate achievement in comics.

So it went. Simon and Kirby pitted our heroes against the White Death, the Hangman, Dr. Grimm, the Unholy Legion, Ivan the Terrible, the Ringmaster, the Camera Fiend, the Fang, the Fiddler, the Lord of Death, Ra the Avenger, the Black Witch, the Black Toad, the Black Talon, and a host of others. Of these, the Black Talon was the most fascinating. He was Pascal Horta, an artist whose hand had been mangled in an accident. A new hand was grafted onto his arm as a replacement. It was the mitt of an African murderer, Strangler Burns. The evil nature of the hand corrupted Horta, giving him great strength and a murderous nature—but he retained his artistic proclivities. On the cover of #9, he was shown painting Bucky's portrait with one hand while he strangled him with the other. The Black Talon showed up in *Young Allies Comics* #2 and then, as a dream image in #18. He never showed up again, sad to say.

Artistically, Simon and Kirby couldn't be beaten. They threw in full-panel pages, and they pioneered the two-page splash, opening Cap stories with a panoramic action-and-horror-vista. The first of these was in #6 ("The Hangman"). The double-page splash survived them and was included in most issues in the war years, usually in the centerfold.

But the real meat of their stories was the slam-bang action. Jack Kirby had few peers as a fight-scene artist, and even though he and Joe Simon realized that you had to have a story before you can have a fight—something all too many young artists seem to have forgotten—when he got to the right point, you could be assured that Cap was going to make fistic music on as many crooks' jaws as Kirby could crowd into a page. Bad guys flew out of panels, mowed down like wheat before the mighty fists of Cap and Bucky. Once, when a Japanese sub commander radioed a chamber to see how his men were doing, Captain America took the message, standing ankle-deep in fallen enemies. "There's nothing wrong that Captain America can't fix! See you in a minute—you rat!!"

So for ten classic issues, readers were bombarded by the comics' front man against Fascist tyranny: the unbeatable Captain America.

Then, after ten issues and two *All-Winners* stories, Jack and Joe were gone. They reportedly had a disagreement with Martin Goodman over financial matters. DC Comics welcomed them with open arms, and they began their tour of duty there on Boy Commandos, Sandman, and Newsboy Legion. Jack Kirby wouldn't be back until the Fifties, and Joe Simon never returned.

Life After S&K

Captain America Comics survived and thrived after Simon and Kirby's departure. They had laid a good foundation for the character, and their successors—notably Stan Lee, Otto Binder, Al Avison, Syd Shores, and Vince Alascia—carried on with the building. Anyway, hands other than Jack's or Joe's had already been doing Cap stories in *All-Winners* #3 up and *All Select* from the start. So, when #11 came out with Avison and Shores art, hewing closely to the Simon and Kirby style, it wasn't a disappointment. (According to the comics researcher Martin O'Hearn, #11 may have already been scripted by Kirby, and possibly laid out by him, before his leaving.) Adolf Hitler himself symbolically sneered over the splash page of "The Case of the Squad of Mystery!" while Cap scrutinized a line of soldiers, wondering which ones were Nazi spies. Things were moving along as usual.

Cap spent the rest of that issue patching up a feud between two hillbilly clans, fighting a masked murderer at an opera house, and, in general, having a fine old time. #12 introduced his first impressive post-Kirby costumed villain, Dr. Crime, in "The Weird Case of the Pygmies of Terror!" Otto Binder wrote the story and Al Avison drew it, keeping the Kirby eight-panels-to-a-page layout but injecting more of his own style into it. Dr. Crime himself was a skull-faced, yellow-cloaked criminal scientist after a formula which could and did shrink people to Doll Man size. He used it to shrink crooks to a size that facilitated them sneaking in through letter drops in doors and the like. After shrinking Cap and Bucky for a time, Dr. Crime was unmasked as one Dr. Elmgren and sent to jail. He returned in an issue of *All-Winners*, and really deserved more appearances than that.

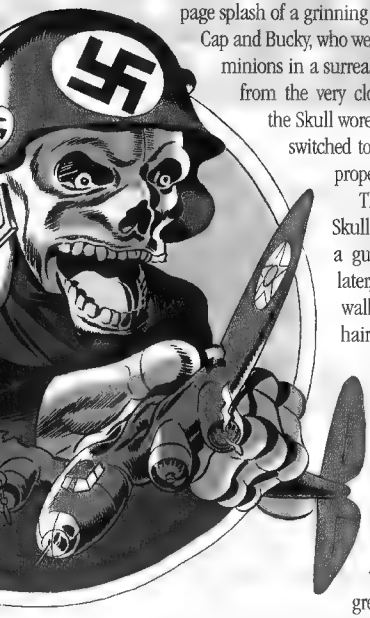
Cap #13 finally got us into the War properly. It was the first issue produced after Pearl Harbor, and a corner banner proclaimed it the "All Out For America Issue!" A small circle on the bottom left adjured us to "Remember Pearl Harbor," but it was overwhelmed by the Syd Shores drawing of a gigantic Captain America, flanked by Bucky, landing a powerful right to the jaw of an equally gigantic Japanese soldier. Below them, normal-sized ships and planes made war, looking like toys in a bathtub,

while Cap declared, "You started it! Now—we'll finish it!"

Captain America stories rapidly grew to 20 pages or more in length, with Al Avison handling the art chores nicely. Their sagas were festooned with "name" villains, deadly traps, enemy agents, and enough action to give Yakima Canutt a whiplash. As such, it couldn't miss. Before long, *Captain America Comics* was outselling *Marvel Mystery*, and Timely had long since established Cap as the third leg of their heroic triangle with the Torch and Namor.

Red Skull's Deadly Revenge

Possibly the most classic Captain America story of the post-S&K era came in issue #16, with "The Red Skull's Deadly Revenge!" Stan Lee and Al Avison perpetrated this effort, which opened with a big centerfold double page splash of a grinning Skull aiming a flaming arrow at Cap and Bucky, who were also faced by the Skull's armed minions in a surreal castle jail cell that was forming from the very clouds themselves. Diplomatically, the Skull wore a Japanese flag on his chest, but switched to his usual swastika for the story proper.



The tale opened with the Red Skull getting out of prison by knifing a guard and taking his keys. Days later, Steve Rogers and Bucky Barnes walked past a mustached, white-haired, unspeaking man who was sinking arrow after arrow into the center of a target. Later, the archer donned his crimson skull headpiece, and remarked, "Practice, practice…every day for months! Finally I've become as proficient with the bow and arrow as with a gun! Now it's time for my great plan!" The Red Skull charged off into the night, armed with a bow and a quiver of arrows.

In the meantime, our heroes had heard of the Skull's jailbreak, and donned their costumes to go on the prowl. But the Skull himself had rounded up a trio of spies, killed one with an arrow to show he meant business, and led the remaining two to set a deathtrap for Captain America. The star-spangled duo encountered and bested the Skull's men during a bank robbery, but Bucky wound up shot in the back by one of the Nazi's arrows. After Cap got his friend to the doctor, he returned to camp, unknowing that the Skull was following…and baiting another trap. When the American Avenger was lured to one of the Skull's own hideouts, he was pinned to a stone wall by the Skull's sharp arrow-points. The Skull closed to attack his foe, and got pinioned in a body scissors. But his hands were free, and Cap's face was exposed. Snarling, "You're not up against one of your weak opponents now, fool!" the Skull battered Cap into insensibility.

Afterwards, he unmasked Cap, discovered his wallet, and checked his ID. "So, Captain America…you are really Private Steve Rogers of the United States Army! And the Red Skull's prisoner at last!" He removed Cap's costume, leaving him clad in an Army uniform, and surprised his cohorts by showing up dressed in Cap's own colors and carrying his shield. He proceeded to go on a crime spree, with Steve Rogers helpless to stop him. As a caption put it, "Red Skull at large! Captain America trapped! Bucky deathly ill! This is indeed a sad day for American justice!… The police, the army, the people, are all helpless to halt the deadly progress of the Red Skull!"

But the trussed-up Steve Rogers, on a bread and water diet, weakly but steadfastly vowed to the Skull to find a way to bring him to justice. If so, it'd have to be quick. In Captain America's uniform, the Red Skull bluffed his way into an Army office, stole important defense secrets, and left with a note signed "Captain America." Our hero was branded a traitor in the press, and hunted by the FBI.

Bucky, hearing a newsboy in the street calling out the news, dragged himself woozily from his sickbed and went to go to his friend's aid. Incredibly, a doctor who saw him refused to help, saying, "Let him go…perhaps it's best!" Bucky picked up the trail of the Skull, went to the hideout, and freed his chained friend. Minutes later, with some costumes from a theatrical store, Cap and Bucky were after their foe again. This time, the good guys won, catching the Skull, reclaiming Cap's shield and the defense plans, of his escape plane. "Golly, Cap, he's really dead! We got him after all!" said Bucky, standing next to the Red Skull's "lifeless" body.

Such was not the case, however. The story continued into *Young Allies Comics* #4, in which the nefarious Nazi picked himself up and kept going, and going, and going. But it had been the best Red Skull story of the Forties.

Cap Gets Gruesome!

Captain America and Bucky busied themselves fighting the Axis's most heinous agents throughout the war. Since the Comics Code didn't yet exist, Stan Lee and company were free to do what Timely did best back then: get gruesome. One memorable ad showed Bucky clasped tight in the arms of a villain dressed up as a giant snapping turtle, with the kid about to have his head snapped off by the villain's sharp, saliva-dripping teeth. The Crocodile, who appeared in issue #19, had much the same schtick.

Another tale (in #36) pitted Cap and Bucky against the horrible Dr. Necrosis, whose bulge-studded, misshapen face was the reflection of his evil soul; his plan was to murder Allied soldiers with poisoned blood plasma.

"The Invasion From Mars" (#15) sent our heroes against a horde of Martians who had chosen to invade New York in a remake of Orson Welles' War of the Worlds broadcast. They were Nazis dressed in Martian drag, as it turned out.

Still another story (#52, "The Telepathic Typewriter") had Captain America and Bucky fighting Am, a mind monster created from the dreams of a pulp writer, whom he later murdered. Am was finally destroyed when the typewriter on which he had been written was smashed, in a large final panel which showed Cap and company string into the abyss in which Am had vanished.

Then there was The Robe (#53), a cheap crook who became a world-beater when he came across a robe supposedly once worn by the devil himself.

In "The Mikado's Super Shell" (#18), a double-page splash showed Bucky tied across the mouth of a gigantic cannon, and dared us to guess whether or not Cap would free him before the Japanese baddies lit the fuse.

"Sub-Earthmen's Revenge" (#17) featured hooded men who rode giant worms (shades of Frank Herbert's *Dune*!), led by Medusa, a sexy princess in fishnet stockings.

"Machine of Doom!" (#17) introduced us to a mad scientist who nearly

succeeded in destroying the world with a matter-smasher before a half-materialized Cap and Bucky stopped him. In "Satan and the Sorceror's Secret" (#21), a black magician sought the aid of the Devil himself in fighting Captain America, and died when Cap reflected his evil-eye gaze back with his shield, like Perseus fighting the Gorgon.

There were two Yellow Claws to be fought, neither of them being the Atlas villain of the 1950s. The Red Skull made two more appearances, just to let us know he was out there (#38 and 61). There was Dr. Agony and the Seven Sons of Satan and the Gargoyle and the Mad Torso and the Spawn of the Witch Queen and the Fakir and The Creeper and the Reaper and Crimorto and the Leopard and just a whole big horrible bunch of others (whew). All of them went up against Captain America, and all of them lived to regret it... if they lived through it.

In short, our heroes did not lack for foes to fight. Moreover, these foes were exceedingly deadly. Captain America's villains usually began the story by murdering people, the more the merrier, and it wasn't unusual for whole populaces to be threatened—and many in that populace wiped out—before Cap and Bucky could put a quietus to the villainy. This was a reflection of the times. People, both soldier and civilian, were being killed by the thousands overseas. The parents of American servicemen were oftentimes visited by a messenger, or a letter, informing them gently that their sons wouldn't be coming back this time. Megadeath, unfortunately, was a part of life back then, and the bad guys of the comic book universe could hardly compete with their real-world counterparts such as Hitler and Stalin.

But in the comic books, there was always that guy in blue, with his trusty kid sidekick and a shield that always warded off the hardest blows a Nazi could deliver. And if he could inspire a kid in the real world to do whatever he could to help the Allied cause—it was enough.

Truth to tell, many kids were. The Sentinels of Liberty enrolled so many members that the government asked Timely not to take on any more (see this issue of CBM, Page 36). They needed the metal which was used for memberships badges to be put to use for the war effort. Thus, Captain America took one page of his comic as a platform to ask his readers not to send in any more dimes, as Uncle Sam had asked him to lay off. Bucky suggested that they use the money to buy defense stamps instead.

World War II Ends

But one threat lurked in the wings for Cap, one he and the soldiers he symbolized would bring into being: the end of World War II.

After you've saved the world from the Nazis, what do you do for the rest of your life? Every comics hero created as a response to Hitler had to face that problem in 1945. Some comics houses rushed anti-Nazi stories into print before V-J Day, or not long afterward. A few (such as Fawcett) ran "Now it can be told!" stories set in the war, publishing them over a year after the end of the conflict. Some others ran stories of Japanese and Nazi militarists who just wouldn't admit the war had ended. (There was some ring of truth to this, as witness the isolated Japanese soldiers lost in island jungles who didn't hear of the end of the war for twenty years or so.) Other stories were just dropped, or retooled, or forgotten.

Good guys like Superman, Batman, and Captain Marvel had been created before America's entrance into the war. They managed to forge their postwar identity quite nicely by going back to crook-catching. (Actually, Batman had rarely tangled with the Axis at all.) Cap had never shunned crime-fighting per se, even in the Simon and Kirby period. But now, with the Nazis subdued, he and his creators had to cope with the problem of stateside living—and adventuring.

Sgt. Duffy made his last appearance in *Cap* #47, near the war's end. Steve Rogers and Bucky Barnes stayed in the Army through issue #51, cover-dated December, 1945. By that time, they were fighting in the Pacific Theater of War, but not for long. *Captain America Comics* #52, without fanfare, had Steve and Bucky out of their Army uniforms.

Cap's Origin Retold!

For a while, Timely staved off the question of Cap's postwar status by not showing much of his or Bucky's life out of costume. Finally, in *Captain America* #59, they made a decision. The cover showed Captain America and Bucky shadowed by wraiths of a bespectacled Steve Rogers and Bucky Barnes—in civvies... Captain America had been demobilized!

The cover story, "The Private Life of Captain America," was something of a milestone in Cap's career. Writers Stan Lee and Alan Sulman took it seriously enough to retell Captain America's origin, redrawn almost panel-by-panel from issue #1, at the start of the story. But they prepared us beforehand with a splash panel of Cap and Bucky knocking at a door labeled "Fate," and a caption that read:

Readers who have followed the exciting career of Captain America know he is in reality Steve Rogers, recently dis-

charged from the US Army! But surely you must have asked yourself...who is Steve Rogers? What did he do before the draft? What are the plans of this ex GI for the future? These Timely questions will now be answered...

So Steve and Bucky were out of the service, and Steve was in search of a job. Fate intervened with a telegram from Henry Hawley, principal of the Lee School, reading, "City records show you were a public school teacher before you were drafted for service. If you are not teaching now and would like a position, would you contact me?"

It only took a page for Steve to reach Lee, a reconverted mansion in what had become a semi-slum district, and to enter the blackboard jungle. Bucky was enrolled in one of his classes. It wasn't certain what grades the Lee School covered. But, since Bucky never aged, it could have been anything from kindergarten to junior college. (Actually, it was probably a junior high or high school. Bucky never looked old enough to date girls.) He spent the rest of the story alternating between teaching classes as Steve Rogers and busting a gang of crooks which was making use of one of his pupils. "Private Life" ended with said pupil gratefully bringing Rogers an apple in class. It had a worm in it.

Before long, Betty Ross turned up as a fellow teacher at the school. Things were looking up. Thankfully, Sgt. Duffy didn't turn up as a truant officer.

For the rest of their career, Cap and Bucky fought crook gangs, the occasional costumed criminal (including the Catman and the Human Fly), and, in an encore performance, the Red Skull, who turned up in #61 to make sure we hadn't forgotten him. Things continued in this fashion through issue #66. In that issue, Bucky bit the bullet.

Good-bye Bucky, Hello Golden Girl!

He and Cap had interrupted a villainess named Lavender and her gang in the middle of an ambergris robbery. (Her crime motif was perfume.) She responded by shooting Bucky in the chest. Letting the crooks go, an anguished Cap rushed Bucky to the hospital. Bucky's life was saved, but he would require hospitalization for months to come. He made one wish to Captain America: "Get Lavender for me."

Grimly, Cap set out to do just that. "But it will be tough going, doing the job alone!" he mused. "I'm used to working with a partner!"

At that point, he heard somebody calling his name. It was Betty (then Betsy) Ross. Wheels started turning in Cap's head. After interviewing the lady and discovering her athletic bona fides, he unmasked before her and laid out his plan. Since Betsy had been a government agent as well as a crack athlete, it didn't take much training to turn her into a costumed partner for Cap. She designed and donned a mask and a mostly yellow costume, showing a lot of leg, and called herself "Golden Girl." And, though Lavender eluded her at first, she redeemed herself by following up a clue that led them both to the villainess, and taking her down personally.

When Cap allowed that Golden Girl was a "big help," she threw her arms around him. "Here, now!" protested Cap. "That's no way for a seasoned crime-fighter to act! On second thought, this is something I've always wanted to do!" He gave her a big kiss, punctuated by a "Smack!" sound effect encircled by a heart.

The real reason for Golden Girl's debut, of course, was to inject a little girlie appeal into the feature. Timely had struck paydirt with the sexy Blonde Phantom strip a couple of years earlier, and would do well later that year with Venus, which would survive the fall of the superheroes. Female aides were added to the Human Torch (Sun Girl) and Sub-Mariner (Namora, the best of the three). George Olshevsky has pointed out in his *Marvel Comics Index* that "comics got a lot sexier after the war." But of course, George...the baby boomers had to come from someplace, didn't they?

But Captain America wasn't a Fiction House title, and Golden Girl came into the mix too late to make much of a difference... a year later, Cap made his last 1940s appearance. She was a little better than Sun Girl, but not as good as Namora. When she returned in the 1950's revival, it would be as Betty Ross, not Golden Girl.

The Sci Fi-Horror Cap

Several interesting stories followed, including "The Secret Behind the Mirror" (#67) with the Mxyzptlk-like Mr. Zrr, "The Weird Tales of the Wee Males" (#69), in which Cap ran across a race of Lilliputians, and "Murder In the Mind" (#72), which placed Captain America and Golden Girl literally inside the brain of a criminal. But probably the best of the lot was "Worlds At War" (#70). In fact, Stan Lee and company liked it so well that they reworked it, minus Cap and Golden Girl, for a science fiction story years later. One Professor Kulto decided to become the savior of the world, while correctly predicting he would become the "world's most hated man," by causing a threat that would unite the warring nations of the world in a common cause—survival.

That threat was a war with Mars. Kulto went to H. G. Wells and Orson Welles one better in using an atomic ray to draw Mars out of its orbit, bringing it near enough to Earth so that the warlike Martians would be in a range to strike, via their rocket ships. "In the name of Ogg, war lord of Mars, we attack!" hollered the Martians, and did just that, in a mass of rocket ships so numerous it looked like a plague of locusts. The Martians were fifteen feet tall and not overly disposed towards pacifism.

Kulto, explaining his theories to Cap while the latter had his hand buried in Kulto's shirtfront, had indeed briefly united the Earth's conflicting nations. Russia sent troops to aid the US against the invasion. But Kulto hadn't anticipated that the Martians might be stronger than the combined might of all Earth's nations. Cap himself got captured while scouting out the enemy, and was told by Warlord Ogg himself that, unless the Earth surren-

Cap in the Movies

Captain America was doing his part, even in the real world. He did it so well that he was tapped as the hero for a 1943 Republic serial, **The Adventures of Captain America**. Cap was the only Timely hero to be so honored–and it may have been a good thing. The moviemakers dropped his Steve Rogers identity, his partner Bucky, and his shield, gave him a gun, a new ID as a district attorney, and a girlfriend, and sent him against a criminal mastermind. Thus, it was not for purists, but at least it laid on the action and gave fans a chance to see a guy in the costume in live action. At least it was no worse than the ill-considered TV movie and video flop that utilized Cap's name and costume in later years.

dered, the Martians would destroy every human being on the planet within 24 hours. Things looked grim, but Cap came up with the one golden phrase in every Marvel comic: "I've got it! The one chance in a million!"

The captive hero was taken to an already-destroyed New York City, where he reunited with Golden Girl and discovered that Kulto had been killed in the war. Our hero faked his way over to Kulto's atomic attractor-ray machine, reversed the charge, and sent Mars back to its proper orbit. When Ogg learned what had transpired, he snarled to Cap, "You puny fossil, I'll crush you like a matchstick!"

Some matchstick. Cap clobbered him in two panels.

The Martians, unable to eat Terranfood, zoomed back to their native world to stave off starvation. With their departure, things got back to normal on good old Earth, with Cold War tensions on the rise again. And Steve Rogers ended the story by preaching to his class: "Remember one great lesson we can all learn from the Martian invasion, students...never try to cure one evil by a greater evil! Class dismissed!" Ozymandias, take note.

Bucky made a last appearance in #71, literally out of a sickbed. When Steve Rogers heard that his old partner had recovered and was leaving the hospital, he raced from mid-class to greet Bucky with open arms. Bucky was still on the mend, but managed to help Cap deal with a villain called The Trickster, without donning his uniform. Then Bucky was gone again, and would not reappear until the Fifties revival.

Cap #73 featured "The Outcast of Time!" which concerned a lawman of the future in search of a villainous robot who looked an awful lot like Vincent Price. Golden Girl made her final appearance in the second story of the issue, helping Cap battle The Dream Master. But it became obvious that Cap's sales were on the wane. Golden Girl had proven of little help. A new, desperate, last-chance move was made. Captain America became...a horror comic.

Weird Tales

Captain America's Weird Tales #74 was fronted by a cover on which the Red Skull, approximately the size of Colossal Boy, stretched his talons towards a tiny-sized Cap and a cover girl who made no interior appearance. Cap himself only appeared in the lead story. The Red Skull had apparently died (which was news) and gone to Hell (no surprise). Once there, he took the opportunity to sneak over to a book which held the names of the soon-to-be-damned, and entered Captain America's name on it. When the bookkeeper demon came to check, he muttered with a smile, "I never thought I'd see his name here!"

Late that night, Cap opened his door to a demon who had politely knocked on it, fell through a dimensional hole into the Pit, and was ferried by Charon across the river Styx. Soon enough, he met with the gloating Skull, but the latter was forced to admit to the Devil that he had been finagling with the ledgers—bookkeepers have been busted for a lot less. To set things straight, the Red Skull and Captain America were set against each other in battle, with Cap's freedom at stake. Even though the Skull wielded the Grim Reaper's own scythe, Cap avoided its touch and belted the Skull into the flames. The Devil obliged by blotting out Cap's name from his ledger with a fiery finger, and by returning Cap to the land of the living.

Since the Red Skull turned up hale and hearty in the Fifties revival, it'll take a lot of finagling to make this story canonical. Best to mutter, "To hell with it," and press on.

The rest of *Cap's Weird Tales* #74 was taken up by three run-of-the-mill horror stories. The next issue of *Cap's Weird Tales* had no Cap stories at all! Without Captain America, Timely had the option of simply calling the title *Weird Tales*—not a good move, legally. But without Captain America, there was no need to continue the title at all. It was easier to cancel it and start up a new horror-fantasy title...or two...or two dozen!

JOE SIMON
JACK KIRBY
"THEY CAN'T BE KILLED!" WAS THE ONLY SOUND BETTY ROSS COULD PRY FROM A DYING MAN'S LIPS...THEN SHE WAS SWIFTLY PLUNGED INTO A HORRIFYING MYSTERY THAT INVOLVED A NATION'S LIFE BLOOD--THAT CHALLENGED THE MIGHT OF MIRACULOUS CAPTAIN AMERICA AND HIS YOUNG FRIEND BUCKY! WHAT WAS THE SECRET OF THE ORIENTAL GIANTS?
CAPTAIN AMERICA
AND THE AGELESS ORIENTALS WHO WOULDN'T DIE!!
IN A DOWNTOWN BANK, TWO EXECUTIVES HOLD A SECRET NIGHTLY MEETING
"I TELL YOU BENSON, WE'RE ABSOLUTELY RUINED! THE GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY INVESTIGATING-
HEH-HEH-HEH! DON'T LET A LITTLE MATTER OF G-MEN AND INCOME TAX EVASION SCARE YOU FINLEY- DON'T FRET! THEY'LL BE HERE SOON!

Captain America—Commie Smasher!"

So, in 1949, Timely made a clean sweep of cancellations, closed out their superhero line, and pressed on with a plethora of titles in other genres. They did horror, science fiction, romance, teen humor, westerns, war, funny animals, crime, and they did some combinations of each. (These included the funny-war comic, *Sgt. Barney Barker*, and Western romance titles, plus the romance-horror-superhero-science fiction-glamour gal title *Venus*.) They just didn't do superheroes.

In those days (and to some extent in these days), kids were into and out of comics as a phase, dropping the books when they considered them too juvenile to read anymore. Parental and peer stigmas were much more anti-comic then, and people who read the books past a certain age were often considered cretins by the Establishment. The kids and GIs who had read *Captain America Comics* in World War II had moved on to other things. The boys learned about girls, and the ex-soldiers were busy making new lives.

But Stan Lee's first story in a comic had been about Captain America. And he never forgot the guy with the shield. In 1953, at one of the coldest points of the Cold War, the Human Torch, Sub-Mariner, and Captain America made a brief comeback. It started in *Young Men* #24. Within two years, the whole

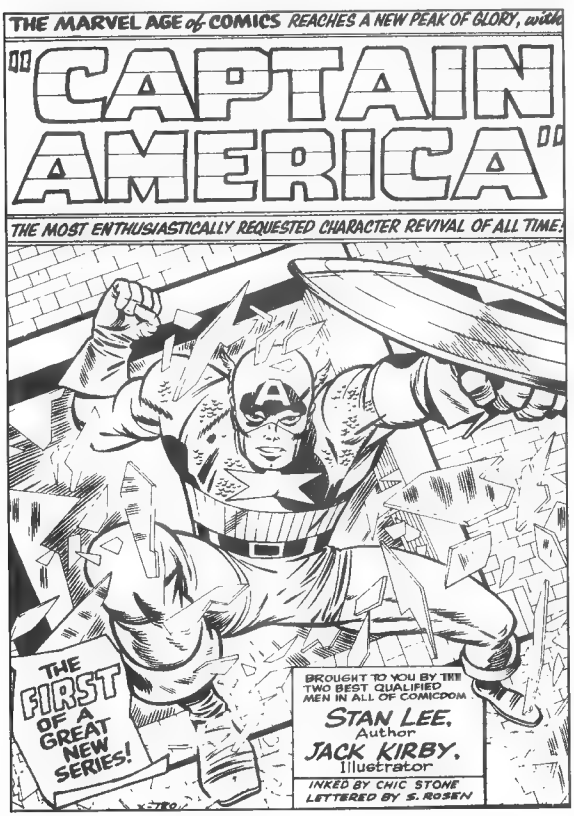
thing would be abandoned. Cap's new artist was John Romita, with Mort Lawrence handling a tale or two. Writers were uncredited, but Stan Lee almost certainly wrote most of the new Captain America stories.

The first new Cap story was entitled "Back from the Dead!" In short order, we learned that Steve Rogers was still teaching at the Lee School, and Bucky Barnes was still one of his charges. The Red Skull was also still around, now working for the Communists. His moniker seemed to fit his new employers. The Skull had taken the delegates of the United Nations hostage, and, when Steve and Bucky heard about it on the radio, they hauled out the old red-white-and- blues and swung into action. They defeated the Skull quickly and served notice to the world that Captain America and Bucky were back!

Captain America was reinstated, starting with its old numbering. Just to make sure where Cap stood these days, each of the new issues (#76-78) had the cover cutline, "Captain America--Commie Smasher!" The first cover had an exuberant pair of heroes standing triumphant over a defeated Commie spy, with the police rounding up a bunch of Reds in the background. In the climate of the Fifties, nobody had to explain the scenario to the kids.

An opening caption read: "Yes, the greatest champion of democracy is back with his pal, Bucky...back to fight the worst menace the freedom-loving peoples of the world have ever faced! Together they battled Fascists and Nazis, but now they're ready again to fight...The Betrayers!"

Much has been made of Captain America's anti-Communist fervor of this time, and the final caption of this issue: "Beware, Commies, spies, traitors, and foreign agents! Captain America, with all loyal free men behind him, is looking for you, ready to fight until the last one of you is exposed for the yellow scum you are!" proves it. But, as history has shown, Communist spies were not just a McCarthyist fantasy, and Communist aggression was hardly something that came out of a comic book.


THE MARVEL AGE of COMICS REACHES A NEW PEAK OF GLORY, with
"CAPTAIN AMERICA"
THE MOST ENTHUSIASTICALLY REQUESTED CHARACTER REVIVAL OF ALL TIME!
THE FIRST OF A GREAT NEW SERIES!
BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE TWO BEST QUALIFIED MEN IN ALL OF COMICDOM
STAN LEE, Author
JACK KIRBY, Illustrator
INKED BY CHIC STONE
LETTERED BY S. ROSEN

However, Cap was pretty heavy-handed in his anti-Communism, at least to modern eyes. This new, 1950's plan for Captain America was to put Captain America back in his original Army milieu, with the Reds taking the place of the Nazis. But the Korean War was over, and The Vietnam War was (for us, anyway) a decade in the future. All Cap would battle was Communist spies. He was certainly up to that, but his new assignment didn't seem as full of oomph as the one in which he'd taken on half the German army, with a few Japanese thrown in for flavoring, and won. (The 1950's Cap also lacked the Kirbyesque art that was the trademark of his Forties predecessor.)

On the second page of his first new issue, Cap declared, "Bucky, there's a war going on... a war of spies! We're going to join in on that war... as soldiers in the Army!" Actually, a career in the FBI or CIA would seem more appropriate if you wanted to fight spies, but Cap may have been watching the Army-McCarthy hearings that week. At any rate, Steve and Bucky ended up in Army drab again, beset by one Sgt. Shanty Trucks (honest!). Betty Ross came along to round out the cast.

Even the Red Skull showed up in a later issue of *Young Men*, and appeared to die in a truck wreck. Our heroes fought an assortment of interchangeable Commie spies, plus two standout villains: the Man With No Face, a Chinese agent, and Electro, a genuine supervillain with electrical powers (a later incarnation of Electro would later surface as an early Spider-Man villain). But the stories really weren't all that hot, and, after three issues of his own comic, four appearances in *Young Men*, and two in *Men's Adventures*, Captain America bit the dust. The Human Torch died alongside him. Sub-Mariner hung on for ten issues, buoyed up by Bill Everett's art, and then went to Davy Jones' locker.

The Marvel Age Cap

Captain America would not grace the cover of a comic for nine years... but by 1963, things were looking up for superheroes, especially at Marvel. The Human Torch and Sub-Mariner were making new careers for themselves. It was time to see if Captain America was worth gambling on.

Strange Tales #114 (November 1963) bore a cover scene of the new, teenage Human Torch tossing a fireball at a red-white-and-blue clad figure who warded it off with his shield. A blurb proclaimed, "From out of the Golden Age of Comics into the Marvel Age, CAPTAIN AMERICA returns to challenge the HUMAN TORCH!" Johnny Storm himself mused, "Impossible as it seems, one of the most fabulous superheroes of the past is now my enemy!"

Stan Lee wrote the story and Jack Kirby and Dick Ayers drew it. The action-art showcased Captain America in a new, supercharged manner, superior even to his Forties tenure. But even though it looked like Cap was working on the side of evil, the Torch unmasked him at the end as The Acrobat, one of his old foes in disguise. In the final caption, Stan gushed, "You guessed it! This story was really a test! To see if you too would like Captain America to return! As usual, your letters will give us the answer!"

About four months later, *Avengers* #4 came out, with a familiar heroic figure dominating the cover, under a blaring "CAPTAIN AMERICA LIVES AGAIN!"

Cap had passed the test.

Lou Mougin has been writing about comic books since the early Eighties. Special thanks to Ara at Microcomics (who has microfiche of Cap #1-60 at affordable prices), Bob Klein for the loan of fiche, and Randy Scott at Michigan State University Library for interior illoes.

Boston's Biggest Buyer

of Comic Books & Original Art!

Buying & Selling:
Golden Age & Silver Age Comics
Original Art, Movie Posters,
& 1960's Toys & Games

Recent Purchases:

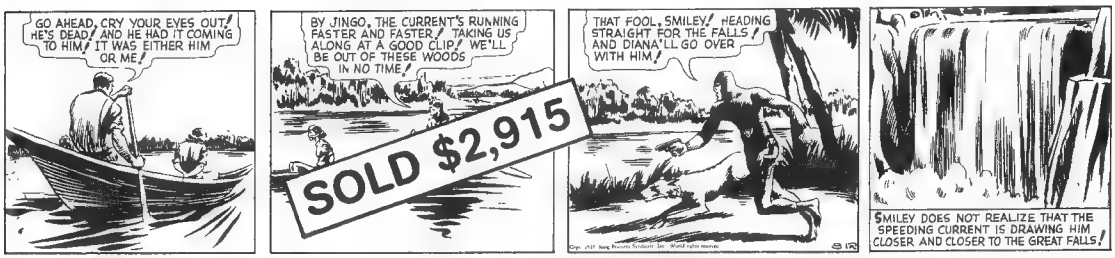
Comics:
Superman No. 1 (Mile High) $180,000
Original Art:
Batman No. 12 (Cover) $36,000
Superman No. 17 (Cover) $21,000

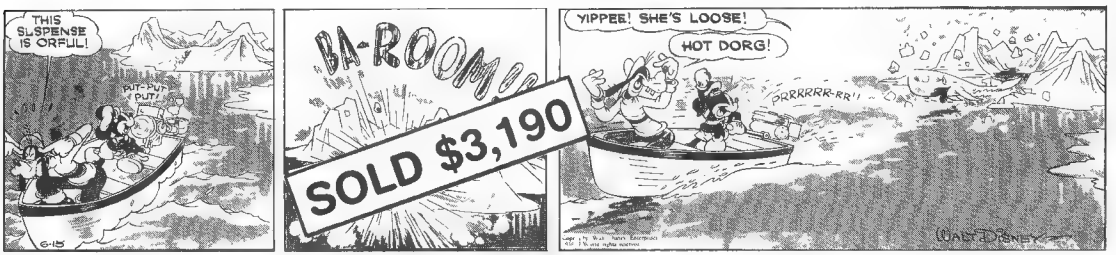
Nostalgic Investments

Call Bechara Today
(617) 984-2006
269 Fayette St. Quincy, MA 02170

TRAVELING IN THE NEW ENGLAND AREA?
GIVE ME A CALL!

STRIP ART IS *RED HOT!*


GO AHEAD, CRY YOUR EYES OUT! HE'S DEAD! AND HE HAD IT COMING TO HIM! IT WAS EITHER HIM OR ME!
BY JINGO, THE CURRENT'S RUNNING FASTER AND FASTER! TAKING US ALONG AT A GOOD CLIP! WE'LL BE OUT OF THESE WOODS IN NO TIME!
SOLD $2,915
THAT FOOL, SMILEY! HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THE FALLS! AND DIANA'LL GO OVER WITH HIM!
SMILEY DOES NOT REALIZE THAT THE SPEEDING CURRENT IS DRAWING HIM CLOSER AND CLOSER TO THE GREAT FALLS!



SPARKLE'S MOTHER SENT HER OVER TO SPEND THE DAY WITH BONNY BRAIDS.
SHE'S THE DOGGONEDEST PRETTY BABY I EVER SAW.
DO YOU REALLY THINK SO?
SOLD $825
AND AT TRACY'S FRONT DOOR.
CHESTER GOULD
YES, WE WANT TO TALK TO YOU.
ME? WHAT HAVE I DONE?

Russ Cochran's Comic Art Auction is sent out five times a year to comic art collectors everywhere. If you collect comic art or would like to start, send for a free sample copy or call our toll-free number to subscribe at $25 for five issues ($33 to Canada; $40 overseas in U.S. Funds drawn on a U.S. bank).

If you have strip art to sell we are now taking consignments for our next Auction, which is scheduled for late June. Send Xeroxes, write or call:

RUSS COCHRAN, PO Box 469,
West Plains, Missouri 65775. 1-800-EC CRYPT.

My Favorite Hero!

It was the Summer of 1976 (the bicentennial year) that I went from being a kid of 12 to a teenager of 13. It was also the summer that I knew Captain America was without a doubt my favorite hero. It's a strange phenomenon, choosing one's favorite character, but one that every fan goes through and one of the truly universal experiences of comic book collecting.

Before you can really appreciate my decision I should give you a little history leading up to that memorable event. For a couple of years prior to the Summer of '76, my closest friend that shared my interest in comics was Mike Sutter. By that time I had accumulated hundreds of comics, yet Mike's collection always seemed better.

A typical day included playing with his MEGO action figures, drawing, and reading comics for hours, mostly at his house. I admired Mike in a lot of ways and we agreed on just about everything except for one thing... Mike actually said "Iron Man can beat up Captain America!" You laugh now, but at the tender age of 12 or 13 that kind of heresy could crumble the very foundations of a friendship!

The moment Mike uttered that preposterous statement, I can remember defending the Star Spangled Avenger with a case so strong that even Johnny Cochran would have been left speechless. I told him "Cap is the greatest hero of all time, just look at *Tales Of Suspense* #58... It shows that Cap can beat up that loser Iron Man! Or *Strange Tales* #114... even a fake Cap can whip the Human Torch!" I was so irate at his suggestion because he had insulted MY FAVORITE HERO!

That day I left Mike's house a changed man, confident and sure that I had made the only choice that I could, and that I had done a good job sticking up for CAP. I also remember that I didn't have a lot of the original issues of early Kirby Cap in those days... I had read many of the stories in the bonanza of reprints available at the time. In that regard, allow me to pass along a list of some of those very reprints that made Captain America so special to me. Some of the best Captain America stories of all time are available in these inexpensive reprints and many are still "priceless" to me.

AVENGERS
CAPTAIN AMERICA LIVES AGAIN!
ALSO IN THIS ISSUE... SUB-MARINER
STRANGE TALES
FROM OUT OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMICS INTO THE MARVEL AGE...
CAPTAIN AMERICA RETURNS TO CHALLENGE THE HUMAN TORCH!
SGT. FURY AND HIS HOWLING COMMANDOS
CAPTAIN AMERICA
BUCKY!

Oh, by the way Mike, if you are out there somewhere and reading this... Cap can still kick Iron Man's lame butt!!! I just had to get that out of my system. See you next time.

INEXPENSIVE SILVER CAP REPRINTS

Strange Tales #114 (Captain America Try-Out, Pre Avengers #4) Reprinted in Capt. America #216 (Dec 1977)

Avengers #4 (First Silver Age Appearance) Reprinted in Marvel Milestone Edition Avengers #4

Sgt. Fury & His Howling Commandos #13 (Early Solo crossover by Kirby) Reprinted in Special Marvel Edition #11

Tales of Suspense #59 (Solo Stories begin) Reprinted in Giant Size Captain America #1 (Dec 1975)

Tales of Suspense #63 (Silver Age Origin by Kirby) Reprinted in Giant Size Captain America #1 (Dec 1975)

Tales of Suspense #66 (Origin of the Red Skull) Reprinted in Avengers King Size Special #3 (Sep 1969)

Capt. America #100 (First issue of Cap's own series) Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #1

Capt. America #101 Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #2

Capt. America #102 Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #3

Capt. America #103 Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #5

Capt. America #104 Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #6

Capt. America #105 Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #7

Capt. America #106 Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #8

Capt. America #107 Reprinted in Marve Super Action #9

Capt. America #108 Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #10

Capt. America #109 (Origin retold) Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #11

Capt. America #110 (Classic Steranko art) Reprinted in Marvel Super Action #12

Capt. America #111 (Classic Steranko art) Repr. Marvel Super Action #13.

Thanks to: Beppe Sabatini's Guide to Marvel Reprints, The Marvel Comics Index *by George Olshevsky, and the 1997* Overstreet Price Guide.

BY SHAWN HAMILTON

Why sell when I've got so little $$ into the book?

The traditional Fall/Winter lull has set in, although the feedback from dealers indicates, their slower sales this summer are being offset by mail order customers and retail walk-ins. Many hold the theory that collectors just didn't want to spring for the extra travel expenses to the summer conventions and that every dollar saved is now being spent on-line, on magazine advertised items, or on material offered in catalogs. Every collector I have spoken with seems to love this time of year. Deals can be had all over, the new and latest "hot" book can still be discovered here and there before the information "spreads," and prices seem to be a bit more flexible. All this is good news for collectors.

Pre Golden Age/Golden Age (1933-45)

There was a time when Golden Age collectors only collected Golden Age, Silver collectors only Silver, etc. But the last few years we've seen an amazing number of modern comics fans less interested in the latest "Lady Death" and suddenly in the market for "those neat old Marvels from WW II." Also, low grade Golden Age seems to have found a real niche with collectors as they see a GD Marvel Mystery for under $200 as a bargain. While high grade books still seem to find a quick home for Guide prices. Mid grade Timelys that Guide for $450 to $850? They seem to be at a standstill just like many mid grade Silver books.

Sales: Batman #20 FR $65; Captain Marvel Adventures #3 FN $750; Daring Comics #11 VF+ $700; Detective Comics #15 AppFN $1,200; Flash Comics #2 GD $980; Golden Arrow #1 VG $170; Green Lama #1 GD $165; Hangman #2 FN $520; Hit Comics #24 VF $600; Keen Detective Funnies V2 #7 $180; Large Feature Book #3 VG $420; Marvel Mystery #2 FR/PR $1,950; Mystery Men Comics #1 GD/VG $1,150; Mystic Comics #7 FN $1,500; Patsy Walker #1 GD $110; Police Comics #2 FN $1,100; 100 Pages of Comics #101 FN $750; Sensation Comics #13 VG/FN $260.

Atom Age (1946-56)

"If you find it, they will come." Patience and perseverance are the key for locating these esoteric books. This uphill battle stems from a waning of comic production and superhero interest during this publishing era as well as the reduced circulation caused by the Wertham attacks on comics. Additionally, those collectors that bought these books before the boom paid so little for them that there is not much incentive to sell... even for today's vastly inflated values! "Why sell when I've got so little money into the book?" seems to be the common cry.

Just where are all those Fox Romance and pre-Code horror books that everyone is clamoring for? The appetite for these seems insatiable at present with demand easily surpassing supply. And if you are trying to find specimens in high grade, good luck! Anything with Matt Baker (anything!), horror, odd one shots, and newly discovered keys are all in huge demand. Dealers continue to lament the fact that most of the above material just cannot be purchased by them resale at anywhere close to a wholesale price.

Sales: Captain Easy #17 NM $100; Captain Flight #11 GD/VG $135; Contact Comics #11 VF $290; Dagar #16 VF/NM $470; Flash Comics #102 GD $325; Green Lantern #37 FN $365; House of Mystery #2 FN $395; Jungle Jo #1 VF/NM $370; King Comics #159 VF/NM $110; Linda #1 VF $175; Movie Love #10 GD $60; Oscar Comics #24(#1) VF $180; Popular Teenagers #5 FN $210; Secret Story Romances #2 NM $95; Seduction of the Innocent (2nd version) VF $150; and Spirit (section) 8/24/52 FN $75.

Continued on page 75

CLIFF WIENER • OLD & GOLD COMICS
10695 LAKE OAK WAY
BOCA RATON, FL 33498
(561) 488-1874

The "selling season" seems to have abated and I think now is the best time of year to buy. All areas of the pre-1955 comic market remain steady here.

Golden Age: Marvel Mystery has really come into its own recently based on the number of requests I've been getting. Issues #2-10 would sell easily for me if I could turn up copies in low grade. (The problem is that I usually keep these books for my own collection...) People I speak with remain excited at the prospect of getting copies of any Action from 1-15 and any Detective from #27-37. As usual, the most actively sought are the issues with Superman and Batman covers. The majority of those same collectors are also focusing on Flash #1 10 and Golden Age Captain America, especially Caps with great covers like #16, 36, 46 and 61 (to name just a few).

I was looking through the Guide recently when I noticed how cheap most "other guys" Golden Age titles still seem when compared to their Timely and DC counterparts. Take for example Startling #10. This book is tough to locate .. it took me 4 years to find my copy and I gladly paid the price for it when I did! This book guides for less than most Captain America issues in the teens and twenties. Another example is Feature Comics #27. The last copy I saw for sale had no back cover and from what I understand it sold for good Guide ($288). Best of luck to those who are hunting these difficult books.

On the hi-grade side *Continued on page 74*

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, WE HAVE

$PENT MILLION$

BUYING COMIC BOOKS

WE HAVE PURCHASED
MANY INDIVIDUAL BOOKS
AS WELL AS MANY
OF THE MAJOR COLLECTIONS
SOLD IN NORTH AMERICA
OVER THE PAST
FEW YEARS

CALL TODAY
FOR IMMEDIATE,
NO NONSENSE,
RESPONSE!

SHOWCASE NEW ENGLAND™

BOOKS SHOWN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY • WEEKDAYS 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. E.S.T.

CALL DANIEL GREENHALGH TODAY

CBG Customer Service Award 1994-1997

Member AACC Authenticity, Certification, & Grading Committee

(Christie's Auction) 1994-1997 (Sotheby's Auction)1995; Special Advisor to Overstreet Annual 1995-1997

4 CENTER STREET • WALLINGFORD, CT 06492 • (203) 265-3466 FAX (203) 265-6991

ACTION COMICS, DETECTIVE COMICS, SUPERMAN, BATMAN, SHOWCASE & FLASH © 1997 DC. MARVEL COMICS, HUMAN TORCH, SUB MARINER, SPIDER-MAN, CAPTAIN AMERICA & AMAZING FANTASY © 1997 MEG

THE VAULT COLLECTION

PREMIUM KEY HIGH GRADE SCARCE BOOKS FOR SALE!

	OLD GUIDE	OUR PRICE
AMAZING ADVENTURES		
1 NM-	$1,100	$3,100
(1ST Marvel Superhero Dr Droom. SCARCE!)		
AMAZING SPIDERMAN		
101 (1st Morbius) NM+	$150	$150
149 (1st clone?) NM	$70	$60
20 (1st Scorpion) NM/NM+	$345	$380
46 (2nd Molten Man) NM/NM+	$90	$110
59 (1st Mary Jane) NM/NM+	$75	$75
69 (3rd King Pin) NM/NM+	$50	$60
ARCHIE, PUREHEART THE POWERFUL		
1 NM-	$60	$70
(Uncommon)		
2 NM+	$40	$60
(Uncommon)		
AVENGERS		
1 (SCARCE!) NM+	$225	$200
4 (1st page signed by Stan Lee!) NM- $1400 $1350		
Batman 200 (Anniversary Issue) NM/NM+ $160		$120
BRAVE & BOLD 62 NM+	$100	$100
(1ST Silverage Black Canary, Wildcat & Starman)		
CAPTAIN MARVEL		
1 NM/NM+	$90	$80
CAPTAIN NICE		
1 NM	$65	$50
CONAN		
3 (Low Distribution!) NM/NM+	$170	$120
DAREDEVIL		
18 (1st Gladiator) NM/NM+	$54	$60
DOC STRANGE		
169 (1st Issue + Origin) VF /NM-	$130	$90
DOOM PATROL		
121 (Death of Doom Patrol) NM	$80	$80
FANTASTIC FOUR		
100 (Anniversary Issue) NM	$70	$90
46 (1st Full Inhumans) NM	$60	$70
48 NM+	$850	$1200
(1ST Silver Surfer and Galactus!)		
55 (THING VS Silver Surfer) NM/NM- $75		$90
67 (1st Warlock) NM	$105	$110
ANNUAL 3 (Big Wedding Issue) NM $165 $280		
FOUR COLOR COMICS		
1256 NM+	$70	$70
(1st Kona Monarch of Monster Isle)		
596 VF+	$675	$650
(1st Turok, Son of Stone, SCARCE)		
GHOST RIDER		
1 NM	$80	$80
GOMER PYLE		
1 (Uncommon) VF+/NM	$60	$80
GREEN LANTERN		
40 NM+	$490	$490
(1st App Crisis on Infinite Earths 2nd Solo Golden age Green Lantern, Origin Guardians)		
43 NM+	$70	$65
52 (VS Sinestro) NM+	$75	$70
H R PUF N STUFF		
1 NM+	$140	$90
HOUSE OF SECRETS		
92 (1st Swampthing!) NM/NM+	$435	$560
HULK		
102 (re: Origin) NM-	$150	$130
IRON FIST		
14 (1st Sabretooth) NM+	$150	$120
IRON MAN/SUBMARINER		
1 NM	$140	$130
KORAK		
1 (Uncommon) NM+	$45	$70
LOIS LANE		
70 (1st Catwoman) NM/NM	$200	$200
MAD		
24 (1st Mad Magazine! SCARCE!) F+	$276	$360
MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E		
1 VF+/NM-	$135	$100
MARVEL SPOTLIGHT		
2 (1st Werewolf by night) NM-	$60	$60
5 (1st Ghost Rider!) NM	$110	$90
MARVEL SUPER HEROES		
(1st Capt. Marvel) VF/NM	$100	$90
MARVEL TALES		
ANNUAL 2 VF/NM	$80	$120
(Reprints Xmen, Avengers & Doc Strange Origins)		
MARVEL TEAM UP		
1 NM-	$90	$70
MY GREATEST ADVENTURE		
80 NM-	$350	$530
(1st DOOM PATROL!)		
SEADEVILS		
1 NM/NM+	$450	$560
SHOWCASE		
30 (Origin: Aquaman) NM/VF	$680	$740
32 (Aquaman) NM-	$376	$280
SILVER SURFER		
1 (Square Spine) NM/NM+	$415	$420
STAR TREK		
1 (All Have Photo Covers) NM-	$450	$360
4 NM/NM-	$185	$100
5 VF/NM	$185	$100
6 VF/NM	$150	$80
8 VF/NM	$150	$80
9 VF/NM	$150	$80
STEVE ZODIAC & XL5		
NM	$70	$60
STRANGE TALES		
89 (A beauty!) VF/NM	$400	$1100
FIN FANG FOOM BY JACK KIRBY! SCARCE)		
135 (1st Nick Fury) NM/NM+	$95	$140
TALES OF SUSPENSE		
1/ NM- $230 $230		
(Googam, Son of Goom BY JACK KIRBY!)		
48 NM/NM-	$220	$360
(1st New Iron Man)		
TALES TO ASTONISH		
36 (3rd Antman) VF/NM	$550	$490
41 VF/NM-	$215	$180
42 VF/NM-	$215	$180
44 (1st Wasp, Scarce) VF/NM-	$240	$380
TEEN TITANS		
1 NM/NM+	$175	$200
THOR		
158 (Re: Origin) NM+	$62	$70
WIERD WAR TALES		
1 VF/NM-	$50	$130
(EXTREMELY HOT and Uncommon!)		
WILD WILD WEST		
1 (Uncommon) VF/NM-	$115	$100
X-MEN		
94 (1st new X-men) NM/NM+	$400	$560

THE VAULT COLLECTION

C/O Collectible Treasures Investments
10387 Friars RD. #114, San Diego, CA 92120
PHONE: (619) 295-1221 • FAX (619) 295-7726
Credit Cards/MO's take an 8% Discount!

MARKET REPORTS

Continued from page 72

of the Golden Age marketplace, DCs sell from 1.25 to 1.75 Guide, but only if the collectors need the books for their collection and if they are true VF/NM or better. Timelys sell much slower and only sell for 1.5 Guide for solid NM copies. I don't handle pedigree books too often because most of my customers do not want to pay the multiples of Guide these books usually cost.

Atom Age: Pre-Code Horror leads the way here in the Atom Age category. Horrific, Weird Terror, Mr Mystery, Menace, Weird Mysteries and just about every other title sell, sell, sell! The best part about these books is that they are still cheap and the runs are usually short. (The low number of issues in the runs make them appear deceptively easy to complete.) These low priced books don't last long and are quickly gobbled up by collectors who know how tough-to-find these books really are. Crime books are strong here also, but only for the best covers and the SOTI issues. This could change as more collectors finish their runs on horror titles.

Good Girl books do well as long as they're priced around Guide. Baker and Kamen books do the best by far here over all the rest of the good girl books.

GREG WHITE

17 W MONUMENT AVENUE
KISSIMMEE, FLORIDA 34741
(407) 870-0400

Hello and welcome to autumn in Central Florida. Sales of older comic books have been sluggish here during the fall season. We have been able to receive full Overstreet prices on only a select group of books (Timelys, Hitler covers, L.B. Cole covers) and have had to offer both Golden Age and Silver books at prices well below Guide. I have spoken to many long standing dealers of late and everyone reports a similar story. I now use the Overstreet Guide as a 1/2 price guide—which means that I cut the prices in half on over 80% of the listed book prices. This is working as many more comics will sell at half Guide as opposed to full Overstreet price. Of course I have also cut back the percentage of what I pay for collections to around 25% I am still able to pur-

chase a couple of quality collections per month at that rate. This practice allows us to move product, please customers and still replenish our stock.

The challenging times that our hobby faces require adjustments throughout the entire field. We need to generate more interest (which will lead to greater sales) and I feel the most direct manner to achieve this is bringing the comic book prices back to an acceptable level.

1935-1955 Material

Interest continues in wartime books and special interest covers. The problem is keeping a healthy stock of these issue. Most of the mainstream titles from this period are slow. We did purchase a group of Timelys recently and were able to place all of the issues we cared to sell within weeks. On the other hand we didn't have a land office rush for the Batmans or Captain Marvels.

Recent Sales: USA #7 VG/FN $600, Superman #4 GD $350, and All Star #24 FN $350.

1956-1969 Material

These books have also been slow. Certain high grade issues will bring a quick sale but most of the titles (especially books below VF condition) are slow here. Marvels from 1962-1963 remain popular as do origin and first appearance issues. We bought a full run of JLA and Silver Age Strange Adventures last week. We have priced the books well below Guide. It will be interesting to see how they sell.

Recent Sales. Spider-Man #41 FN $45, Fantastic Four #9 VF $450, Green Hornet #1 VG $25, Batman #155 VG $35, Green Lantern #40 VG $40

Artwork & Toys

Maybe it is just the time of the year, however these items are not blowing out of the store either. We have Aurora models and Capt Action dolls that have been sitting for at least a month. We also have a nice selection of animation art that is slow right now. Perhaps the Holidays will bring out the buyers.

Recent Sales: Flintstones Cel $75, Donald Duck Xylophone in box $175, Dick Tracy Sunday page $800.

That wraps us for this month. I hope the next time you visit the Walt Disney World area you will stop by and say hello!

SCHIFFMAN CONT.

Continued from page 72

Silver Age (1956-69)

Of course one can't say that Silver is "hot" again, but books that had not been selling over the past three years are again changing hands. High grade, and discounted low grade is doing very well. Also those that adjusted their mid grade selling prices down to more reasonable levels found a receptive audience that keeps coming back for more. Even reading copies of Tales to Astonish and Tales of Suspense have been finding homes of late. And those that quietly bought high grade Silver at very favorable prices during the Gold boom have seen their investments really pay off.

Sales: Captain Action #1 NM $90; Captain America #100 GD $55; Flash #110 GD $150; Forbidden Worlds #73 FN $160; Frogmen #1 VF $65; House of Secrets #1 43 FN $135; Journey into Mystery #83 GD $480; Kid Colt #100 VF/NM $48; MAD #105 NM $45; Phantom Stranger #1 VF/NM $75; Plastic Man #1 NM $80; Showcase #4 PR/FR $875, #10 GD $290; Silver Surfer #1 NM/M $680; Vampirella #1 VF/NM $450

Bronze Age (1970-79)

Auction prices continue to astound even the most jaded collector (see Tony Starks auction as just one example). The publicity about the Bronze Age boom has "shaken a few books out of the trees," but not as many as predicted. While Bronze Age collecting diehards continue to snap up high grade copies at multiples of Guide, Silver and Gold collectors are starting to pay a lot more attention. Amazingly, even scarce books in as low as GD have realized some "obscene" prices, but it should be noted that the vast majority of the record-breaking prices are paid for VF or better.

Sales: Adventure #435 NM $10; Four Star Battle #1 NM $12; GI Combat #138 GD $8; Green Lantern #76 VF/NM $195; Human Torch #7 NM $8; JLA #82 NM $25, #113 NM $20; John Carter #18 NM $9; Karate Kid #1 NM $8; Legion of Superheroes #1 NM $22; Marvel Premiere #15 NM $38; Outlaw Kid #1 VF/NM $25; Rima #1 NM $12; Shazam #15 NM $14; Star Spangled War Stories #151 GD $35; Supergirl #1 VF/NM $22; Weird Western Tales #39 NM $10; and Young Love #109 NM $85.

The Latest Buzz

All over the country collectors and investors are talking about the article published in the October 20th, 1997 edition of Forbes Magazine... which follows up on their top 400 richest people. The article states, "There are over two dozen that have purposefully avoided the Forbes listing" How? A few through convoluted structural wrangling. But the rest "Buy art and collectibles through a reputable dealer or anonymously."

I received five calls from "investors" after that article hit the stands wondering if their niche was blown. As we all know, collectibles are hot right now, and a lot of money is being dumped in our hobby by those very individuals that are trying to maintain their anonymity. I know of at least six in that group that avidly collect comics. So, if you are one of those that don't want to see your name on the Forbes pages with Perelman and Gates (and I know you don't) listen to the Forbes experts and visit your local dealer. I'm sure he'll keep your secret!

Collectors should note that the opinions expressed in CBM Market Reports are solely those of the individual dealers and collectors who contribute them. Seasoned hobbyists are acutely aware that prices vary based on geographic location, time of year, and a number of other marketplace factors.

MARKETPLACE MAIL

Continued from page 9

the strip a number of years later.

Carl Horak, Alberta, Canada

Comic Book Hall Of Fame

Jeff and I pondered the idea of having a Comic Book Hall of Fame. Why has the comic book industry fallen short of having their very own Hall of Fame? Is our subculture to be hidden off in a corner, ashamed of our achievements? Hasn't our industry created such marvels as Batman, Superman and Spiderman? Haven't these icons of superheroism dashed upon our television sets and big movie silver screens? Do we feel that the mainstream populace would not care to know of the achievements of such illuminaries like Will Eisner, Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Joe Simon and many others? Why hasn't the comic book industry united to come up with some kind of plan to open up a Comic Book Hall of Fame? Proceeds from our purchases of comic books could help pave the way for this Hall of Fame. Our most successful financially secured leaders of the comic industry could contribute for the financing of this Hall of Fame and take lead to begin the first building blocks of this great Hall of Fame.

While everyone is competing with each other and letting egos get in the way of things and calling the most valued purchaser of comic books a "fanboy", we should all be getting a grassroots organizations together and start looking towards the future of our industry. A "Comic Book Hall of Fame" would give the industry recognition that it desperately needs. We need to show our pride for our subculture, because comic books are the gateway to imagination and wonder. Comic books touch not only our small subculture, but they touch everyone from the movie industry, to fantasy enthusiasts, to science fiction, to romance, to horror, to real life depictions of people and more. Since we touch so many people's lives, would they not also be interested in our Hall of Fame?

Our last and final questions. Will only sports, movies and other genre have a Hall of Fame? Or are we not worthy of such an exhibition? If we are worthy and we all feel worthy, then let's get started, I will provide the first building block!!

Jeff Scott Clifford's Comments: Baseball has a Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. Football has a Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio, Rock and Roll Has a Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, and Hollywood has a Walk of Fame in front of Graumann's Chinese Theater. Now it's time for the Comic Book Industry to create it's own Hall of Fame.

It would be selfish of me to say: "Put it in California" when we all know it should go in New York City right by the DC and Marvel Offices. It would contain artwork, comics on displays, documentaries on comic books, and animation videos and movies shown all day long. There would be a committee that would elect comic book professionals to the Hall of Fame: The first inductees would be: Joe Simon, Jack Kirby, Will Eisner, Bob Kane, Bill Finger, Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster, Stan Lee, John Romita, Sr., Gil Kane, Julius Schwartz, Carl Barks, and other prominent old-timers, including Bob Overstreet. All comics companies would have representative comic books on display, and companies like DC and Marvel would be inducted into the hall. Also, characters like Spiderman, Batman, Superman, Hulk, Flash, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, Fantastic Four, Captain America, Iron Man, Thor, Wolverine, Spawn, and others would be inducted.

There would be access computers so people could find out anything about comics, characters, companies, including displays of all covers. There would be one or two conventions held

DAVE SMITH

FANTASY ILLUSTRATED

- OVER 20 YEARS IN THE BUSINESS -

Specializing in Golden Age and Pulps

Catalogs Issued

(206)784-7300 • FAX (206)782-2844

PO Box 30183 Seattle, WA 98103

The Silver Age Super Hero Action Figure Lives Again!

The Ideal Captian Action 1966-1968 Photo Guide Book

Actual archive photos!

Includes:
Capt Action, Batman, Robin, Superman, Capt. America, Spiderman, Aquaman, Aqualad, Sgt. Fury, Phantom, Green Hornet, Lone Ranger, Buck Rogers, Tonto, Flash Gordon, Wonder Woman, Mera, Batgirl, Supergirl, Dr. Evil, Action Boy, playsets, store displays, and much, much more.. in full color!

Actual archive photos!

Only $10 per copy Postage Paid

Old Forest Press, Inc. • Dept CBM • 223 Wall Street, Huntington, NY 11743

PCE PACIFIC COMIC EXCHANGE INC

Over $2,000,000 in Inventory!

Call for Free Catalog

PACIFIC COMIC EXCHANGE, INC.

http://www.pcei.com • E-mail:info@pcei.com

Accepting Consignments

on Golden & Silver Age Comics and Original Art

Corporate Office:
337 S. Robertson Blvd., Suite 203
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
Tel. (310) 836-7234

Shipping Address:
P.O. Box 34849
Los Angeles, CA 90034
Fax (310) 836-7127

TOYS from the 50's INC

I DREAM of JEANNIE

Specializing in 1960's Television Show Toys
Lunch Boxes, Halloween Costumes,
Comics & Games

Peter & Christine Lutrario
110 West 25th St. Ste 805
New York, NY 10001

(212) 352-9182
www.toys-50s.com

every year, including inductee ceremonies. There would be daily lectures and symposiums on comics. There would be a pension fund created for any old timers who have fallen on hard times, and a portion of proceeds would go to these people, and for promotion of the comic book industry. So let's get behind this, comic book professionals and fans, we need a Comic Book Hall of Fame by the next millennium! Sincerely,

Paul Dale Roberts & Jeff Clifford, California

Bulletman and Mr. Murder?

Must concur with your other readers; each month I eagerly look forward to your magazine more than any of the other comics that come out. Each month we receive a glimpse into the past when life was much simpler and belief in the fantastic was more plausible.

A case in point is the wonderful article with Julie Schwartz. To learn more about the early years of science fiction and their fan clubs was educational. I also thought the interview with Nick Cardy was great. I had no idea that Mr. Cardy had worked during the Golden Age. His anecdotes about Jerry Iger and Gary Cooper were hilarious. It is these types of stories which lifts your refreshing book above those that pander to the speculators. What are the chances of seeing an interview done with John or Marie Severin? It would be interesting to see what Stan Lee has to say about his years during the Golden Age.

In a prior CBM issue there was mention of a CBM annual published and subsequently discarded. Are there any plans of having one? Mr. Kochanek's article on the "Mile High" from CBM #2-5 would be great to see along with an interview with Jack Kirby, if one was ever done.

My real reason for writing is that I am having difficulty identifying a black and white pocket book of "Bulletman and the return of Mr. Murder" copyright 1941. I am unable to locate it in either the Photo-Journal or the Price Guide. The books dimensions are approx. 5/8" x 4" x 5 1/2." Any information would be appreciated.

Mike Baker, British Columbia, Canada

35¢ Price Variations

We finally got in the newest issue of CBM (#51), I really wish distributors would do a better job of getting these to stores on time—it seems as if subscribers around here have already been talking about this issue for a few weeks now. I have to say though, that it was well worth the wait. As a long-time Williamson fan, it was nice to see an interview with him—an excellent write up on some of his more obscure work.

I enjoyed the article on the 35¢ cover price Marvel variations. As a long time Godzilla collector, I had already known about and found examples of the 35¢ variations on both Godzilla #1 and 2, but I was certainly surprised to see something as early as Marvel Two-In-One #28 with a 35¢ cover price. I am also enclosing a copy of the 35¢ cover price variation of Omega #9, I'm surprised that this isn't listed in the Guide. I know that I wrote a letter to the Price Guide informing them of it a few years back (during that brief week that Foolkiller was actually hot, remember his mini-series)? I would certainly be interested in knowing if anyone else turns up anymore price variations like that. I know that in the '80s, Marvel did it at least once more when Walt Simonson took over on Thor. There are two different cover prices of Thor #s 338 and 339.

Hard to believe it's been twenty years since the "Mile High" collection was uncovered, and that not one other large collection like that has ever come to surface. I have to agree with Pat Kochanek in thinking that while it might be true some individual books might be technically nicer than Mile Highs, nothing compares to seeing a run of them at one time. I remember when I got my first two Mile High copies (Adventure Comics

Best Comics Hobby Center

Authorized Dealer of Lionel Trains

We Buy & Sell Silver/Golden Age Comics

New Comics • Action Figures • Trading Cards • Star Wars/Star Trek • Vinyl Model Kits
• Lmtd. Ed. Statues • Toy Collectables • Resin Kits & Paint Supplies

252-02 Northern Blvd.
Little Neck, New York 11362
TIMMY MALETTA
(718) 279-2099 • (Fax) 279-2216
http://www.bestcomics.com

SELLING YOUR COLLECTION?

Hear the call of ...

Redbeard's Book Den

- Honest, friendly and reliable service
- Backed by LARGE lines of credit at major Banks
- 20 years in business

Redbeard's Book Den
P.O. Box 217 • Crystal Bay, NV 89402-0217
Phone (702) 831-4848 • FAX (702) 831-4483

I Want to Buy Your Junkie Old Comics!

I will pay for Poor to Very Fine Golden Age superhero comics. Horror, romance, war and crime comics also wanted

TERRY'S COMICS

PO Box 471 • Atwood • CA • 92811-0471

714 • 528 • 3937

I also sell comics!

Treasures Of Youth by Scott

1201 C Street, Hayward, CA 94541

510 • 888 • 9675

Mon.-Fri. 12:00-7:00 • Sat. 11:00-6:30 • Sun. Please Call
Toys, Comics, Cards & Collectibles

Scott McAdam
Owner

#42 and 47), I just couldn't believe how incredible they looked, and how white the pages were. And all for the low price of 'only' 1.5x Guide! Ah, those were the days. (Gary, do you remember sitting in the grading room at Sotheby's telling Ernie Gerber that we'd pay him the incredible sum of 10x Guide for the MH copy of Suspense #3 that was pictured in the Gerber Guide? Who knew that would seem cheap in a few years?)

Did you know that in Japan, their version of the San Diego Con regularly attracts over a 1/4 million people, and that at the last one-day show we attended there, there were over 30,000 in attendance? We've got a lot of catching up to do....

Sean Linkenback, Georgia

Comic Storage

Just a quick note from a long time collector of Silver Age and 1970's books to let you know what a great job you're doing with this magazine! I have been collecting since 1970 and in all my time collecting I've never seen an article on where exactly other collectors store their precious treasures! So I thought I would get the ball rolling!

My wife of ten years agreed a long time ago, that whenever we bought a house it would have to have a room just for my collection. Our first house in 1988 had only two bedrooms, but had a 10' x 10' guest house in the backyard, which at that time was perfect for my collection. In 1992 we purchased our next house and this had four very large bedrooms. The one chosen to be the new comic room measured 20' x 25'—perfect for my collection. Inside my room, I've got four display cases and three book cases. I have a love for comic related toys so they are carefully placed on display alongside several of my comics.

The room is temperature controlled and light controlled. I am the general manager of a company known as MainQuaid Communications which owns several radio and television stations in North Carolina and Virginia, and my job has a habit of keeping me out of my room and in my work. When I do have time, I bring my two and a half year old son into my room to play while I file or bag some books! (Actually, he loves the comic room and knows what he can play with and what is a "Daddy toy"!) As my collection grows...I start looking at ways to get the most out of my space...but I see a problem coming in about five more years!

Oh, I forgot to mention that we have a great security system and the valuable books are in a fireproof safe when I'm not looking at them.

What about you Gary, and the rest of the CBM readers? Thanks again for such a great magazine!

Gary A. Hackenburg, North Carolina

May Not Exist

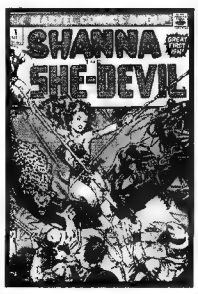
In the March 1997 issue of CBM (#45, page 16) it was mentioned in Nolanis Notebook that Big Chief Wahoo #7 may not exist. I have what I think is the book. The copy is published by Famous Funnies Inc., New York—an earlier owner has dated it 1943. The book isn't in especially good condition—but at least there's a copy.

Ray Ching, Wiltshire, England

Another Cheers from Canada

Greetings! I'm one of your many regular readers, and I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed the August '97 issue (#50!) of CBM. When I'm not being a pastor/theologian in Hamilton, I'm a history of science professor at York U. in Toronto. One of my teaching and research fields is the history of science fiction, which fits in nicely with my collector's passion for the popularised sf to be found in G.A. and S.A. sci-fi comics. (I'm also an avid Batfan, but that's another—though related—story. Thanks, by the way, for your recent Batman cover story.)

The articles in CBM #50 were informative and

COMICS IN A FLASH!
BEST PRICES!
BUY, SELL & TRADE
Comics 1956 to 1980
Specializing in BRONZE AGE
(1970-1979) comics
Senior Overstreet Advisor
TONY STARKS
P.O. Box 3611
Evansville, IN 47735
PH/FAX 812-867-1149
BEST SELECTION!
copyright MCG


STEPHEN RITTER
14313 Mel Smith Ct NE, Albuquerque, NM 87123
FREE huge listings provided upon request.
Extremely tight grading 100% guaranteed returnable.
Call for any listing (505) 275-9171.
GOLDEN AGE * 40s/50s Heros Crime Horror Westerns
60s/70s DC * Low & High Grades Up to 70% Off Guide
60s/70s MARVEL * Low & High Grades Up to 70% Off
GA/SA HUMOR * 40s - 70s Archie Disney Harvey Etc.
60s/70s MISC * Charlton Gold Key ACG MLJ Atlas Etc.
60s/70s MAGS * Warren Marvel N.Lampoon MAD Etc.

COMING NEXT MONTH IN CBM
It's been a long time coming...
Captain Marvel Jr. & Mac Raboy!
plus: The Publisher that couldn't die...
Collecting Fawcett Comics!

fine, and great fun for mid-'40s old farts like me. Living up here in the Great White North on a limited budget, I am envious of those researchers and fans who have actually met the still-living legends—and those fabulous, hard-to-find-and-afford comics they created, and which the rest of us lust after. My studies tend to focus on the late 19th century, so while the texts and illustrations I analyse are fascinating, the writers and the artists are of course long since dead. I'm an amateur student of the early sf pulps too, so the extended interview with Julie Schwartz (who's both iconic and alive!) was a special treat. Kudos to all your contributors.

In addition to all those comics I keep acquiring, I subscribe to about two dozen journals and magazines. CBM is the one I save for when I need a jolt of pure reading pleasure. Here's to the next 50 great issues!

Paul Fayter, Ontario, Canada

Thanks for your enthusiasm Paul—your kind feedback keeps us going!

Rarely Collected

It was a real treat reading the wealth of information available on Archie Comics in the October issue of CBM. It's time that this fine publisher receives some attention it has so richly deserved. Sadly, none of the fine articles published addressed the most nagging question regarding Archie Comics: if Archie Comics are so good, why don't more people collect them?

After a great deal of thought, I have come to the conclusion that Archies are rarely collected simply because the average comic collector simply doesn't have the taste to appreciate them. How else can you account for wonderful, reasonably priced materal like The Archie Americana Series remaining untouched on dealer shelves for months while over-priced kitsch like Lady Death porcelains fly out the door?

Charles P. Alligood, North Carolina

The Defense Rests!

The defense offers rebuttal of Mr. Hamilton's attempt to place Quality at the top of the publishers' talent list. I will give credit where it is due. Quality put out some nice books, and, true, had a few legends on the staff, but sadly they fall short of the fabled staff that Bill Gaines assembled at EC Comics.

Bill assembled the greatest group of talent when it came to comic artists. (Without even asking Dr. Wertham to take the stand.) I present to the court the following books as evidence from one title as opposed to Mr. Hamilton's random selected issues and titles. The defense presents "Tales from the Crypt" #s 20-46. We will not make the unnecessary attempt to bring in the rest of the EC line into the courtroom, although each present exceptional examples of EC's talent.

The following stand accused of being lesser talents: 1)Ghastly Graham Ingles 2)Johnny Craig 3)Jack Davis 4)Al Feldstein 5)Wally Wood 6)Joe Orlando 7)Jack Kaman 8)Al Williamson 9)George Evans 10)Bill Elder 11)Bernie Crandall and 12)Harvey Kurtzman.

I have not given the complete list of artists from other EC works, but will give Mr. Frank Frazetta as an example. EC had the best staff from top to bottom. Never before had such a group been assembled. Never since has any group hosted so much talent. Sadly, no publisher probably ever will.

I am sure the jury's verdict will be that the EC staff will be found the best group of artists ever assembled by a publisher, and Mr. Hamilton's attempt to cast Quality's staff as superior, practically criminal. Nice try Shawn.

Now, on with the show and other topics...

I sided with Bill Howard on the combo grade debate. I say let the collectors unite, and let the joyous news at last be spread, that combination grades are dead, and I am outta here,

Soap Box Dave (Morrow), Kentucky

Thanks to everyone who wrote in this time... we really enjoy your letters! Please note letters maybe edited for content and space. Send your correspondence to:

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

Advertising Rates

The Best Ad Rates in Town!

FULL PAGE AD
(7 1/8 WIDE X 9 5/8" TALL)
$400.00

HALF PAGE HORIZONTAL
(7 1/8 WIDE X 4 5/8" TALL)
$300.00

THIRD PAGE VERTICAL
(2 1/4 WIDE X 9 1/4" TALL)
$235.00

QUARTER PAGE
(4 5/8 WIDE X 3 3/4" TALL)
$190.00

Contract advertisers—
ask for your discount.

Above rates are for black & white camera-ready ads. Include payment with ad copy and forward to the address below. The ad deadline is the 10th of every month. Rate Card and further information available upon request.

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE
C/O GEMSTONE PUBLISHING, INC.
P.O. BOX 180700
CORONADO • CA • 92178-0700

CONTACT: MICHAEL NAIMAN

619 • 465 • 2669
FAX
619 • 698 • 6695

QUALITY AUCTIONS SINCE 1985 **CONSISTENCY**

QUASAR COMICS

presents

FANTASTIC MAIL BID SALE #22!

COMICS, SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY, PULPS, BIG LITTLE BOOKS, ORIGINAL ART, FANZINES, COLLECTIBLES

☑ QUALITY

A wide selection of accurately described and attributed comics and collectibles from the Golden-Age to the Modern-Age are offered for all collecting preferences.

☑ CONSISTENCY

Mail bid and phone auctions on a regular basis for 11 years.

Accurate conservative grading that stays the same year-in and year-out.

☑ INTEGRITY

Founding Member: *American Association of Comic Book Collectors (A.A.C.C.).*

Member: *A.A.C.C. Authenticity, Certification and Grading Committee, Sotheby's Auctions, New York, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996.*

Winner: *Comic Buyers' Guide Customer Service Award.*

Advisor(Present/Past) to: *Overstreet; Comic Book Marketplace; Comic Buyers' Guide Price Guide; Comics' Source*

☑ SATISFACTION

Over 14,000 lots sold in previous auctions, ***less than one-third of one percent returned*** *for any reason.*

We frequently receive letters of thanks and appreciation from our customers world-wide.

Seven-day return privilege. We pay your return postage costs.

Ninety-day interest free lay-away plan.

☑ CONVENIENCE

For your convenience, we accept MasterCard and Visa. We also offer an interest free ninety-day lay-away plan for purchases greater than $100.

☑ CONSIGNMENTS

Our seller's consignment fee never exceeds 20% and can be as low as 10%. We do not charge a buyer's fee. Single books valued from $50 and up as well as some lots of less expensive books are accepted on a space available basis. ***Please call or write for details before sending any books.***

HERE'S A FEW MORE OF THE 1300+ LOTS IN FANTASTIC MAIL BID SALE #22! ~

- **Adventure #78**; **Brave & Bold #30**, 43; **80 Pg Giant #1**; **Lois Lane #6**, 9, 13; **Showcase #28**, 32, 35, 38, 39, 49, 55, 59, 64; **Star Spangled Comics #13**; **Superman #33, 39,** 116, 133, 136 and more G.A. & S.A. D.C.!
- Lots of **Golden-Age, Fifties**, Esoteric, Romance, War Comics!
- **Amazing Fantasy #15**; **Amazing Spider-Man #4, 6, 9**; **Fantastic Four** #5, 20; **Hulk #6**; **JIM #77**; **TTA #3, 18, 40**; **TOS #18**; **Strange Tales #90, 102, 103,** 107, 117 & more nice S.A. Marvels, Atlas & Timelys too!
- **Vampirella** (Warren) magazines including #1, 3 and the Annual!
- **Original Art:** Al Williamson, Gray Morrow; Mark Schulze, Kevin Eastman and more!
- **Batman #35, 87, 99,** most issues #120-200; **Detective #73,** etc!
- **Mickey Mouse Magazine V3#2, V3#6, V5#7**
- **Charlie Chan #1, Miss Cairo Jones #1; Animal Fables #1**
- **Disney Comics: Duck Four Colors # 263, 328, 386, 367, 408,** Dell Giants, etc!
- Assorted **Big Little Books!**
- Early comic/sci-fi **Fanzines!**
- Science Fiction, Fantasy and Comic related books of all kinds!
- **Camp Comics #1; Animal Antics #1;** and many more!

OUR PHILOSOPHY:

We believe a book is worth what some one will willingly pay for it. That's why our auctions have no minimum bids. You will find plenty of stuff sold for 40% to 60% of guide while the truly hot stuff might bring over guide. We are not a "high society" auction house with "buyer's fees" and ridiculous minimum bids, nor do we have unrealistic or hidden "reserves". We want you to be happy with your purchase. We are glad to offer inexpensive books and lots in our auctions. We know not everyone can afford to participate in extravagant auctions. We want your bidding experience to be exciting, fun, fair and enjoyable!

Anticipated mailing date for catalog is November 27, 1997

Send $1.00 for your copy of the auction catalog to:

QUASAR COMICS

Bruce W. Edwards, Proprietor

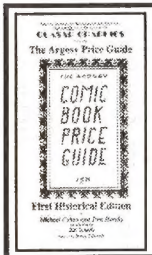
P.O. Box 2227, Louisville, KY 40201-2227

E-mail: Quasarcmx@AOL.COM

WEB: HTTP://WWW.COMICS2000.COM/QUASAR/

Phone: (502) 451-4852 - Fax (502) 454-0025

INTEGRITY **SATISFACTION**



Announcing the publication of **"The Argosy Price Guide First Historical Edition"**

Quasar Graphics is proud to present the first edition of the rare 1965 *Argosy Comic Book Price Guide* in 32 years. Although relatively obscure, *The Argosy* holds the distinction of being the first known comic book price guide (not dealer price list)! Only four copies of the original edition are known to exist. The new expanded edition features the entire original work plus an introduction by comic fandom historian **Bill Schelly**, an excellent retrospective and insight into the making of the guide by the original creators **Michael Cohen and Tom Horsky** and a forward by Bruce Edwards. This edition also contains reproductions of the two known advertisements for *The Argosy* and the covers to the *RBCC* issues that featured the advertisements!

Available now in two editions: The regular edition can be yours for $5.00 postpaid or the deluxe signed and numbered edition of 200, autographed by Michael Cohen and Tom Horsky and printed on premium paper can be yours for $10.00 postpaid.

Order from: Quasar Graphics, P.O. Box 2227, Louisville, KY 40201-2227. *Quantity wholesale rates available on request.*

The Magazine for Golden Age & Silver Age Collectors!
COMIC BOOK
Working without a net... Will EISNER!
The Magazine for Golden Age and Silver Age Collectors
COMIC BOOK
MARKETPLACE
NEAL ADAMS
the DC YEARS

DOES YOUR RETAILER CARRY EVERY ISSUE OF **COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE**?

IF NOT, TELL HIM YOU WANT **CBM** EVERY MONTH!

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE & GEMSTONE PUBLISHING ARE PROUD SPONSORS OF THE **COMIC SHOP LOCATOR SERVICE**. CAN'T FIND A COMIC SHOP? CALL TOLL FREE **(888) COMIC BOOK**.

Visit us on the web
www.gemstonepub.com

GET CAUGHT IN THE WEB!

Gemstone Publishing's Web Site is waiting for you at
www.gemstonepub.com

Price Guides • EC Comics • Comic Book Marketplace • Overstreet's FAN Universe
News, Features, Columns & Interviews by BOB OVERSTREET • BENN RAY
JOHN K. SNYDER, JR. • ARNOLD T. BLUMBERG • J.C. VAUGHN